

Amateur photographer



Canon EOS M5

Speedy AF and great image quality make it Canon's **best mirrorless** to date

Passionate about photography since 1884

TESTED

Wideangle wonder

Why we love the
really wide **Sigma**
12-24mm f/4

30 Photo fixes

Start 2017 on a high - we solve
your biggest photo headaches

- **AF & sharpness**
- **Flash & lighting**
- **Editing and more**

Nikon custom guide

Set up your SLR
for how **you** shoot

Winning landscapes

The new US Landscape
Photographer of the Year
shares his expertise

Photoshop power secrets Martin Evening's photo clinic

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swpp.co.uk/convention

*Pre-register before 6 January 2017 to avoid £10 entry fee to Trade Show.



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The first couple of weeks of January can feel a bit bleak after the excitement and colour of Christmas, but we are continuing to ensure you get

2017 off to a great start. Check out James Abbott's exhaustive collection of cures from some of the most common photography headaches and conundrums – everything from exposure and focusing to editing, to more advanced lighting and flash skills. Another reason to be cheerful is our review of the Canon

EOS M5, a speedy performer that is the company's most convincing mirrorless camera to date. If you're a Nikon user, don't miss the latest instalment of our customisation guide, too – essential reading if you want to shoot faster and smarter.

As always, we'd love to see your images if a particular tip or technique has been useful, so do get in touch, whether by email or social media. AP is more than just a print magazine, it's a global photo community.

Geoff Harris, deputy editor

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ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK



Snowy Mountain by Paul Nadin

Leica MP, 50mm, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 250

This image by AP reader Paul Nadin was uploaded to our Flickr page. There's some debate about whether Leica cameras are the ideal tool for landscape photography. Many people argue that the cameras' light weight and their excellent lenses make them more than up to the task. This photograph by Paul, with its brilliant colours and layered composition, clearly demonstrates the versatility of the

Leica brand when it comes to landscape imagery.

'While driving along the A4086 I noticed this mountain between Capel Curig and Snowdon,' says Paul. 'I was immediately struck by the view because the snow looked just like icing sugar on an enormous cake. I processed the image in Adobe Lightroom and Nik's Color Efex Pro using the Fujifilm 160S film simulation.'

PermaJet PROFESSIONAL INKJET MEDIA 

Win! Each week we choose our favourite picture on Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, Twitter or the reader gallery using #appicoftheweek. PermaJet proudly supports the online picture of the week winner, who will receive a top-quality print of their image on the finest PermaJet paper*. It is important to bring images to life outside the digital sphere, so we encourage everyone to get printing today! Visit www.permajet.com to learn more.

Send us your pictures

If you'd like to see your work published in Amateur Photographer, here's how to send us your images:

Email Email a selection of low-res images (up to 5MB of attachments in total) to appicturedesk@timeinc.com.

CD/DVD Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2400 pixels along its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 24.

Via our online communities Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.

Transparencies/prints Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 24.

NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Liam Clifford

Vote for WPOTY People's Choice



The Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice award is open for public voting until 10 January. The Natural History Museum has chosen 25 of the best images from the competition to be shortlisted for the public's consideration. Visit www.nhm.ac.uk to vote.

BenQ 4K UHD monitor released

Following on from its 27in SW2700PT monitor built for photo enthusiasts, BenQ has announced a larger 31.5in SW320 featuring a monitor hood, 99% Adobe RGB colour space and a 14-bit 3D LUT. The monitor has an HDR viewing mode and GamutDuo, which lets users view content side-by-side in different colour spaces. The new model costs £1,245. Visit www.benq.co.uk.



Canon's Tales by Light on Netflix

Big-name photographers such as Art Wolfe, Darren Jew and Krystle Wright have joined Canon Australia and National Geographic to create a six-part Netflix series following Australian photographers around the world as they travel and perfect their craft. Shot in 15 countries over the course of a year, *Tales by Light* is available to Netflix subscribers now.



When tripod meets torch

Slik has launched a series of tripods that it says is the 'first to incorporate an integrated, removable LED torch in the centre column made especially to illuminate your camera bag while shooting at night'. Five Lite travel models are in the range, from £121.99. Visit www.slik.com.



Cullmann expands its range



A variety of product lines are set to join the Cullmann range this month, including two new tripod ranges called Mundo and Neomax, photo bags, LED video lights and a flashgun for Canon, Nikon and Sony cameras. All the lines will be available through distributor Intro2020. Visit www.intro2020.co.uk.

CORRECTION In AP 17-24 December on page 61 we unfortunately listed Matt Parry's website incorrectly. The correct URL is mattparryphotography.com. Apologies to Matt Parry.



WEEKEND PROJECT

Indoor light trails

Most of us associate light trails with shooting long exposures of traffic and fairground rides outdoors after dark; however, you can achieve creative results indoors as well. With a torch and a piece of string you can capture a variety of geometric light trails known as physiograms. These are created by a single, long exposure of a light source simply spun from a piece of string attached to the ceiling.

To make your own, all you need to do is set a long exposure on your camera and then let gravity work its magic. This is a fantastic technique to try when you don't feel inclined to venture outside into the cold. You will need a room that is dark – some heavy-duty curtains will block out any ambient light – or simply wait until the evening.

1 Hang a light source, such as a torch, from the ceiling using a piece of string (approximately a metre long) and a drawing pin or some strong adhesive tape. Ensure the light source is pointing towards the floor and that it can swing freely.

2 Put your camera on a tripod, set it in a low position and place beneath the torch with the lens pointing towards the ceiling. Make sure you can access the viewfinder to compose and focus on the stationary torch.

BIG picture

Photographer captures beautiful white rainbow in the Scottish mountains

 The winter season can mean coming away from a location shoot with some real magic, as in this shot by photographer Melvin Nicholson. He succeeded in capturing a photo of a rare fog bow on Rannoch Moor on 20 November last year. A fog bow is a colourless rainbow made up of tiny water droplets. It has very weak colours, with a red outer edge and bluish inner edge.

'It was an amazing thing to witness. As soon as I saw this wonderful isolated windswept tree, I knew that it had to be framed by the fog bow. It was just beyond magical and one of those days that I'll remember for a long time to come,' says Melvin.

See Melvin's work at www.melvinnicholsonphotography.co.uk.

Words & numbers

The very secret of life for me, I believed, was to maintain in the midst of rushing events an inner tranquillity

Margaret Bourke-White

American documentary photographer 1904-1971

29,728

Number of photographs comprising the largest photo mosaic (measuring 2,045.39m²), which was achieved in China on 26 October 2016



3 Set your lens to a wide focal length and switch to Bulb mode. Select a narrow aperture, of say, f/18. Not only will this reduce any ambient light, it will also ensure the light trail stays in focus for the duration of the spin.

Experiment with speed and direction of spin to capture different results



4 Spin the torch and take a test shot. The shutter speed will depend on the ambient light, try a 30-40sec exposure to start. Keep the ISO low. If it's too dark, increase ISO or aperture value and vice versa if it's too light.

© MELVIN NICHOLSON



This shot by Andrzej Bochenksi is an entry in the architecture category of the 2017 Sony World Photography Awards

Last call for Sony World Photo entries

HTHERE are just a few days left for amateurs and professionals alike to enter their images into the 2017 Sony World Photography Awards, one of the world's highest-profile photography competitions.

The Open and Youth categories are open to everyone and close on 5 January, while the Professional category in the competition stays open until 10 January.

The Open competition will reward the best single images across the competition's 10 categories, while the Youth competition looks at the best single image responding to a set brief and is open to any photographer aged 12 to 19.

Also closing for consideration on 5 January will be the National Awards – uncovering the best shot from more than 60 countries entered into the Open categories.

The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in London on 20 April, with prizes including the latest Sony camera equipment, inclusion in the 2017 awards' book and cash prizes of \$25,000 for the overall Professional winner and \$5,000 for the overall Open winner respectively.

All winning and shortlisted images

will also be exhibited as part of the 2017 Sony World Photography Awards Exhibition at Somerset House, London from 21 April to 7 May. The exhibition will also feature a special curation of work by the recipient of the awards' 2017 Outstanding Contribution to Photography.

The Sony World Photography Awards, organised by the World Photography Organisation, is the world's largest photography contest.

The 2016 competition received a record-breaking 230,103 images from 186 countries. The grand Photographer of the Year title was won by Iranian photojournalist Asghar Khamseh, and the Open Photographer of the Year title was awarded to Kei Nomiyama from Japan for his ethereal shot of fireflies in the forest.

All entries to the Sony World Photography Awards are free at www.worldphoto.org.



An eye-catching entry for the Portrait category by Peter Dench



Metz launches M400 flash

METZ has now officially launched the mecablitz M400, a small but relatively high-powered flash, designed for mirrorless system cameras.

Powered by four AA-sized NiMH, alkaline-magnesium or lithium batteries, the Metz mecablitz M400 has a bounce and swivel head. It can zoom to cover an FOV range matching that of a full-frame 24-105mm lens, with a guide number of 40 (in metres at ISO 100/21°) at the 105mm position. Depending on your camera, the mecablitz M400 also offers wireless TTL flash functionality with master and slave mode.

The M400 is currently available for most camera brands (Canon, Nikon, Sony, Olympus, Panasonic, Fuji and Pentax) and is priced at £239.



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* when you pay by UK Direct Debit



Kodak is hoping the Ektra will fill a gap in the smartphone-photography market

Kodak Ektra goes on sale

THE Ektra, Kodak's take on a smartphone focused on photography, has gone on sale around Europe and the UK.

With no sign of a let-up in the smartphone-photography boom, Kodak appears to have spotted what it thinks is a gap in the market. It has teamed up with British mobile phone developer Bullitt Group to design the Ektra, with photography-on-the-go as the front and centre feature.

Aside from an exterior build that emphasises its photographic heritage – a

leatherette-coated front, and metal detailing that's reminiscent of older cameras – one of the main Ektra features is a two-stage physical shutter button with the option to half-press to focus. The small handgrip built into the design should be just enough to allow single-handed shooting.

The main camera is based around a 21-million-pixel Sony sensor that includes phase-detection autofocus, with a 26.5mm equivalent, optically stabilised f/2 lens. There's

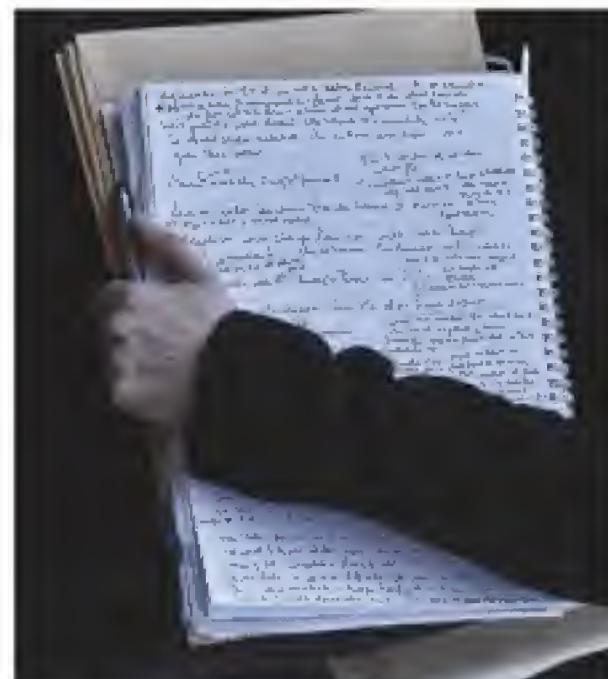
also a 13-million-pixel front-facing camera for selfies, with an f/2.2 lens and phase-detection AF. The 5in IPS screen features Full HD, 1920x1080-pixel resolution, and, like the projecting camera module on the other side, is protected by Corning Gorilla Glass.

Running Android 6.0 Marshmallow, the Ektra also comes equipped with a suite of photo-oriented software. The Kodak Ektra is available from the company's website for £449.

Photographer told aide to 'cover her notes'

AFTER his photo of a Tory aide's notes on Brexit grabbed headlines around the country, photographer Steve Back has revealed that he tried to tell her to cover her folder before snapping his now-famous shot. Speaking to the *Press Gazette*, Back, who runs the Political Pictures photo agency, recounted his attempt to warn the politicians – including chief of staff to Mark Field MP – as they walked towards Number 10.

'I saw four people come out of Number 9 and recognised one of them as Mark Field. I was shouting at his aide to put her notes away. They were laughing and that's what drew my attention to them.'



The famous Brexit 'scribbles' on show

They took no notice of me at all.'

The journalists and photographers had been waiting for the arrival of the Polish prime minister when the gaffe occurred.

For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Get up & go

The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot this week. By Oliver Atwell

GLASGOW



Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert

An exhibition of black & white images shot aboard fishing boats in the North Sea in the 1990s. These images, by Scottish documentary photographer Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert, capture the reality of life at sea for the fishermen of Scotland's North East – the monotony and the gruelling work in harsh conditions.

Until 19 Feb, www.streetlevelphotoworks.org



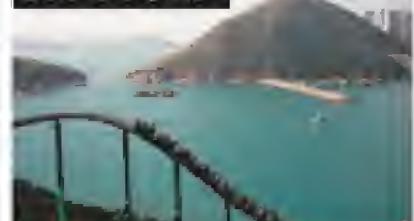
LONDON

Macro photography

This informative and interactive entry-level workshop is for anyone interested in learning to shoot close-up and macro. The course combines practical shooting situations with bite-size theory, quickly enabling you to start shooting inspiring macro images.

13 January, www.rps.org

BRADFORD



The Queen, The Chairman and I

This is a fascinating journey into the entwined histories of China and the UK, traced through the family history of photographer Kurt Tong at Bradford's Impressions Gallery.

Until 18 March, www.impressions-gallery.com



LONDON

Malick Sidibé

This is the first solo exhibition in the UK of the late Malian photographer Malick Sidibé. The photographer was, and still is, celebrated for his black & white images chronicling the lives and culture of the Malian capital, Bamako, in the wake of

the country's independence in 1960.

Until 15 January, www.somersethouse.org.uk

Charlie Waite critique

Stuck in a rut and finding it hard to gain inspiration? Then secure this online critique with landscape guru Charlie Waite. Charlie will advise and help you to explore your thought processes and techniques behind each image. He'll share his insight, as well as inspire you in your quest to improve your photography. The session costs £99.

16 January, www.lightandland.co.uk

ONLINE



Bookshelf



FRED HERZOG
MODERN COLOR

Modern Color

By Fred Herzog

Photographer **Fred Herzog** releases a volume that reminds audiences just how pioneering his colour work was. **Oliver Atwell** takes a look

Published by Hatje Cantz.
Price £26.99.
320 pages,
hardback
ISBN 978-3-
77574-181-1

★★★★★

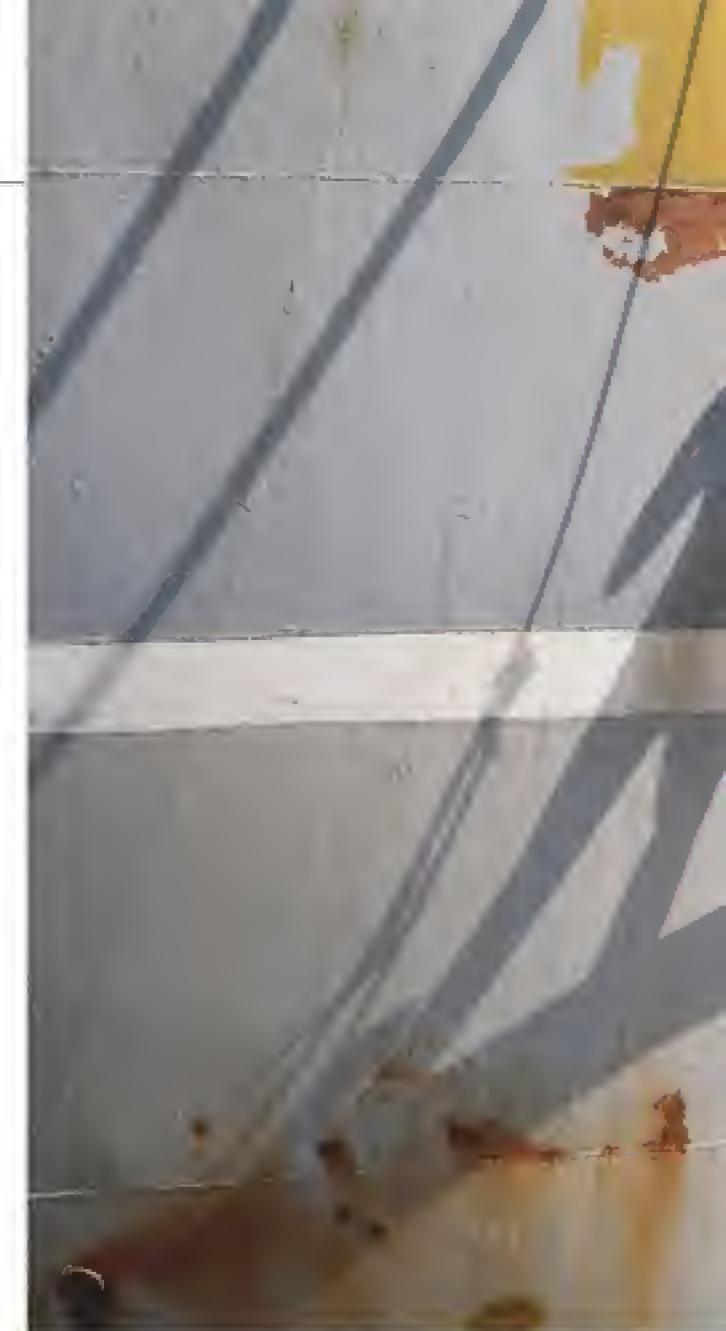
There are always firsts – it's just that in some fields there seem to be more firsts than others. That's especially true of photography, a medium that has a history of 'pioneers' in single fields. Colour photography is a good example. The real pioneer of the medium seems to change depending on whom you ask (most people, perhaps rightly, would say William Eggleston) but let's allow some space for another name: Fred Herzog.

Herzog's work has much in common with William Eggleston, who eschewed big scenes in favour of the quotidian. It was through focusing on the everyday in the US that Eggleston was able to reveal the deeper truths of the world. Scenes of society in the macrocosm, rather than showing us nothing, showed us everything: race relations, urban alienation, gender politics and class distinctions.

Herzog's images, taken in Canada, do much the same. 'Content cannot be manufactured, in my opinion,' Herzog says. 'That which I can find is better than that which you can make. That which we find, the work and the use of the people out there, it's natural, that's what ordinary people do, that interests me.'

In his work, we're shown a world we recognise, anachronistic as some of it may be, yet we relate to it. Despite slight shifts in social, cultural and technological parameters, the world now looks much the same as it did in the '60s and '70s.

There's defiance in the work of Herzog, whose images focused largely on the working class of Vancouver, Canada. Furthermore, his shots were taken using mostly Kodachrome slide film, meaning he was limited in terms of actually getting to exhibit his images in public. Add to this the fact that he was shooting in colour



'Content cannot be manufactured. That which I can find is better than that which you can make'

when the photography scene was still seeing the world in tones of black & white, and you have a photographer who was clearly shooting more for himself than for anyone else.

Developing images

Herzog started taking pictures in Germany in 1950 where, as part of a youth group who every summer went hiking in the Alps, he was given a Kodak Retina I camera. Those images, taken through a camera that possessed only a primitive peephole viewfinder, were lost some years later as Herzog travelled to Canada on a rust-bucket ship that apparently nearly sank. The boat took on water and all the images were destroyed by the corrosive salt water. However, once Herzog landed on dry land he continued taking pictures, the best of which were black & white and featured German immigrants pouring off the boat into Montreal.

A while later, Herzog worked as a medical photographer and also became a serious documentary photographer. He'd spend hours walking around the streets of Vancouver capturing the second-hand stores, signs and people. What was striking to Herzog at this time was that he was beginning to identify a genre that had perhaps not yet found its definition: street photography. Until that point, so few photographers had taken up the idea of simply touring the everyday streets and capturing what they saw. Certainly we can



'Jackpot', 1961: Herzog's work focuses on the everyday experiences of ordinary people



'Boat Scrapers 1', 1964: Through colour and form we find scenes that may be overlooked



'Elysium Cleaners', 1958: An example of Herzog's fascination with billboards and signs

see examples of what appear to be street photography in older work – Walker Evans and Henri Cartier-Bresson, for example – but Herzog's work was framed and defined specifically by this idea.

Eventually, Herzog began to discover the ease and convenience of colour photography. 'First of all, when you do black & white, all you have is the basic resource – a negative. That needs a lot of dancing around the darkroom, and time, patience and energy. You should ideally be a man of leisure, an English gentleman. And a lot of English gentlemen did serious and beautiful photography... But I didn't have time for that. That's one reason I did colour slides. I'd get 36 slides back. Beautiful, finish.'

Colour and Herzog were a perfect marriage. Take a stroll through Herzog's streets and you find a place awash with neon signs, Coca-Cola adverts, yellow

light against thick shadow, vintage cars, billboards and the rest. It's thanks to the lush tones of Kodachrome slide film that he was able to achieve this. It was the best film and most reliable development, although he had to wait an age for the results as he sent them to Palo Alto, California, or Rochester, New York.

It was worth the wait, it seems. Herzog knew that what he was doing was unique. He wanted to unpack the everyday and shock people with the familiar. But it has taken some years for his pioneering work to be recognised.

Ironically, considering his images were film through and through, it's the world of digital that has finally brought his work to the world's attention. Herzog was able to scan his images and present them as he'd always wanted them to be seen. If ever there was a case for the marriage of analogue and digital practices, this is it.

Also out now

The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell

Feminist Avant-Garde: Art from the 1970s

By Gabriele Schor
Prestel, £45, 544 pages, hardcover, ISBN 978-3-77913-446-0

MANY would identify the rise of feminism that took hold in the 1960s with the prevailing sexual liberation that seized the youth of the era. However, this wasn't the case. That sexual liberation was, like most things of that period, a patriarchal trend that came at the expense of women, who were still expected to be subservient.

The 1970s, on the other hand, was the true platform for the tectonic shift in gender politics. It was here that some of the most explosive literature was produced and, as we see in this great book, some of the most confrontational art. Through their work, a swathe of female artists began to identify and subvert issues of gender identity, the representation of the female body and the roles society dictated. Seeing all these artists together in one volume feels like a punch in the teeth, as well it should. The force

of the ideas hits you and forces you to confront those that are still revolutionary today. The fact is, these artists and ideas are as important today as they ever were. There's still a lot of work to do.

★★★★★



© Gabriele Schor

The Long Night of Mégantic

By Michel Huneault
Schilt Publishing, £27.50, 154 pages, hardcover, ISBN 978-9-05330-876-9

ON 6 JULY 2013, a horrific event occurred in the town of Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, Canada. A 74-carriage freight train, transporting crude oil, derailed as it was passing by, resulting in huge explosions and fires. More than 45 people died as a result. Photographer Michel Huneault arrived around 24 hours later and began documenting the aftermath of the tragedy. He returned again and again during the following year, both inside and outside the area that became known as the 'red zone'. This haunting book gathers together his images and his encounters with the locals who were affected by the disaster. While the subject is heartbreaking, Huneault succeeds by, at times, finding the bittersweet beauty of a community that, while scarred, moves on and learns to deal with a past blackened by collective grief. It's an enormously sensitive approach. You'll need to take a few deep breaths after putting it down. ★★★★★





Viewpoint Mike Smith

Can you get pro results for a fraction of the price of a brand-new camera? Mike Smith sets himself the £150 challenge

The Canon EOS-1D X Mark II is currently £5,199, the Nikon D810 £2,399 and the Sony Alpha 6500 £1,499. Heck, the Sony RX100 V is £999. I always used to think the £1,000+ bracket was for the full-frame pro and semi-pro lines, but that price point was passed some time ago, so a recent second-hand purchase of a camera body set me thinking.

The Nikon D700 I bought in 2012 is still the same camera with the same capabilities. It's able to capture great photos and I still love shooting with it. In fact, in a recent back issue of AP, it was one of the highlights. So what cameras out there might be capable of some great output, but with a ceiling of £150 (body only)? I've lined up three to look at, starting with the one that set me on my quest.

I'm a big fan of the Fujifilm Instax Share SP printer but wanted to print directly to it – as some Fujifilm cameras can do. Having been intrigued for a while about the X-system, I decided to investigate a little further. For me the X-Pro and X-T1 were out of my price range, which left me looking at the X-E and X-M. The X-E1 is a beautiful camera and while it hovers in the £150–200 range, crucially it doesn't offer Wi-Fi. This feature was added to the X-E2, which is more expensive. However, the X-M1 turned out to be the first X-series to include Wi-Fi. There is no

electronic viewfinder, just the articulating rear screen and a much simpler set of buttons. Importantly, it still uses the 16-million-pixel X-Trans sensor – that's right, it's the same sensor and mount as the X-Pro, wrapped up in a tiny body. Retailing second-hand at £130–150, I think this makes it one of the best current bargains. By using a manual converter, I can use my Nikon lenses, which allow metering when I'm in aperture priority and the focus peaking is excellent. It has been truly joyful shooting with the X-M1 in combination with an old Nikon series E 50mm lens.

Second on my list is a 2006 Nikon D80 (which I've now had converted to infrared) that sat below the semi-pro D200 with a functional 10-million-pixel sensor, 2.5in LCD screen, SD card support, prosumer control layout and in-body autofocus motor (allowing the use of lenses without motors). Image quality is good and it's a steal at around £100. The D90 is worth the upgrade though (at under £200) and is essentially a stripped down D300, adding 12 million pixels and video recording. Both cameras are a great way to get into the Nikon system at a low price.

And finally? I'm mostly wedded to Nikon, so to feed my gear monkey I felt the need to marry my current lens collection to film. A new F6 will set you back £1,499, but the other options? Well, the F100 was the stripped down version of the F5. What is amazing about using this is that the firmware in the camera is just an old version of my D700. I felt right at home and could put all my lenses on and yet it shot film. It's wonderfully simple to use, with autofocus and metering – it just gets everything right. And at £100 it offers great flexibility in going back to film.

Have you got a £150 bargain? If so, let us know.



The X-M1 – the first X-series to have Wi-Fi

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Mike Smith is a London-based wedding and portrait photographer. Visit www.focali.co.uk

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 23 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

Social life

Here are some of our favourite images from the world of social media this week

Twitter



Amar Sood @asPhotoUK

London's disparate and competing architecture is a godsend for photographers, particularly when angling the camera to the sky and removing the colour. It creates a dizzying scene that utilises the simple technique of lead-in lines.

Join the conversation [@AP_Magazine](https://twitter.com/AP_Magazine)

Facebook



Kenny Hunter

One of our greatest traditions is putting up the Christmas tree in early November. However, if any of you own a cat you'll know the nightmare of their insatiable inquisitiveness as we see in this shot of Kenny's cat, Blossom, emerging from the branches like a shark breaking the ocean's surface.

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Flickr



Richard Fraser

Urban spaces can be given another dimension by the addition of mist, particularly at night. The thin veil diffuses the environment, reducing everything down to simple tones and forms.

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We credit your Wex
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photo hea

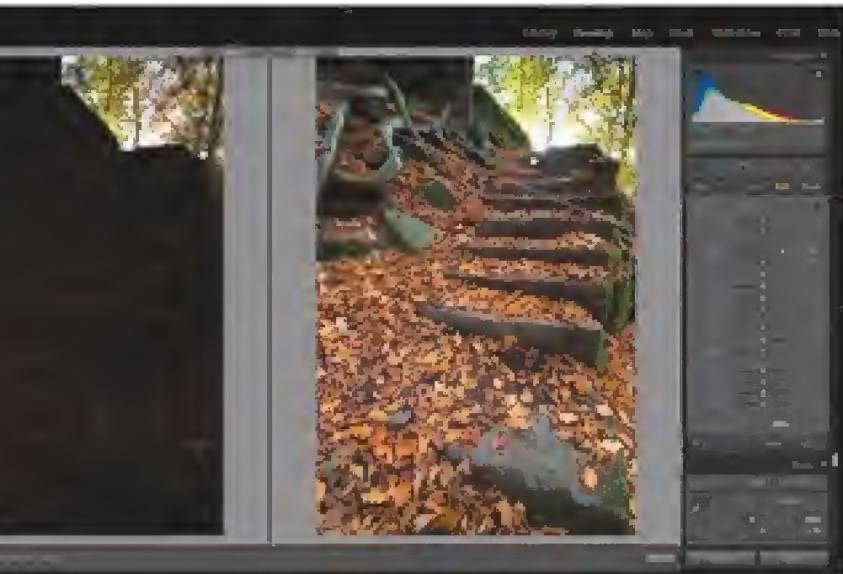
James Abbott identifies some of the most common photographic problems, and shows you how to overcome them

Exposure



1 How to spot and avoid blown-out highlights

Most cameras have a histogram that can be activated when playing back your images. This graph shows the distribution of tones throughout the image, ranging from shadows on the left, to mid-tones in the centre, to highlights on the right. If the highlights or the shadows are bunched up at the side of the histogram, you'll know that highlights have blown or shadows have clipped. To retain highlight detail, check the histogram and if it's bunched up to the right, dial in a small amount of underexposure and take another shot.



2 Expose for highlight detail

One way of avoiding overexposure and blown highlights is to expose for the highlights. When you do this, mid-tones and shadows will inevitably be darker but it's easier to rescue detail from an underexposed image than it is from one with completely blown highlights showing no detail. Shoot in raw and use spot metering to meter from a highlight area, then in Adobe Camera Raw or Lightroom you'll be able to recover detail from the underexposed parts of the image.

3 Get the right exposure for silhouettes

Capturing a bold figure or object in front of a beautifully coloured sunrise or sunset in pure abstract shadow is easier than you might think. Shooting a great silhouette requires little more than pointing your camera at a bright area of the sky and hoping for the best. Shoot in aperture-priority with an aperture around f/11 and metering set to evaluative. If the subject you want to capture is small in the frame you may need to set exposure compensation to overexpose slightly, and if the subject is large in the frame you may need a touch of underexposure.



daches solved



James Abbott

James Abbott is a professional photographer and journalist specialising in portrait and landscape photography. From shooting wildlife images to high-end beauty photography, if you can think of a subject there's a good chance he's photographed it. www.jamesaphoto.co.uk

4 Setting a custom white balance

When shooting indoors under mixed lighting, setting a custom white balance is the ideal way to ensure a near perfect colour balance. Most cameras offer a custom or manual white balance setting that can be accessed via the Quick menu or the main menu. Simply follow the on-screen instructions to set white balance this way.

5 Reducing noise on long exposures

With long exposures you often experience a degree of noise, particularly in the blue channel, which is the noisiest of the three (RGB). To combat this, shoot in raw so you can then apply colour noise reduction to deal with coloured flecks, and Luminance to reduce grain in areas such as the sky using ACR or Lightroom. When you output the image make sure you select 16-Bit TIFF for editing in Photoshop, and then when you've finished reduce down to 8-Bit or save as a JPEG.

6 Relax with Auto ISO

Auto ISO is an amazing feature that ensures ISO is always high enough for the shutter speed to be fast enough to avoid any camera shake. When using this setting you can often set the default ISO the camera will aim to use, such as ISO 100, the upper limit such as ISO 3200 and also the minimum shutter speed. This means if you're shooting with a 50mm lens you could set minimum shutter speed to 1/125sec for peace of mind.



Expose for the sky

Adjust as necessary

7 Taking targeted meter readings

Exposing for a specific part of the subject or scene in front of the camera is an essential part of taking control of the way your shots look. With many cameras, when shooting with spot metering the camera will meter from the active focus point. So if you're shooting a landscape without ND Grads and you want to expose for the sky to maintain detail, simply set the lens to manual focus and focus manually but set the active point to one over the sky and set spot metering. You'll probably need to use exposure compensation to fine-tune exposure.



Spot metering



Centre-weighted



Evaluative

8 When to use the different metering modes

Selecting the right metering mode for the situation can be the difference between a great exposure and one that's way off the mark. And as you know, getting a correct exposure is always preferable. For general shooting, and when there are light and dark

elements in the scene, evaluative is great because it calculates a balanced exposure. When shooting landscapes with ND grads, centre-weighted is ideal as it reads from the central area of the frame and generally doesn't read light from the filtered area, while for backlit subjects spot metering will help to avoid underexposure.

Focusing and sharpness



9 How many AF points should be activated?

The number of active focus points you need depends on the subject. It's safe to say there are few occasions where Auto point selection is a good option, and that most professionals shoot with a single focus point active whether they shoot portraits, wildlife, landscapes or motorsport. However, when it comes to action photography it can pay to activate a few more. Many cameras have an option where five or nine points are activated, with the central point being the dominant one. Then while shooting, if the subject moves away from the main point onto one of the others, the camera will keep it sharp and in focus.



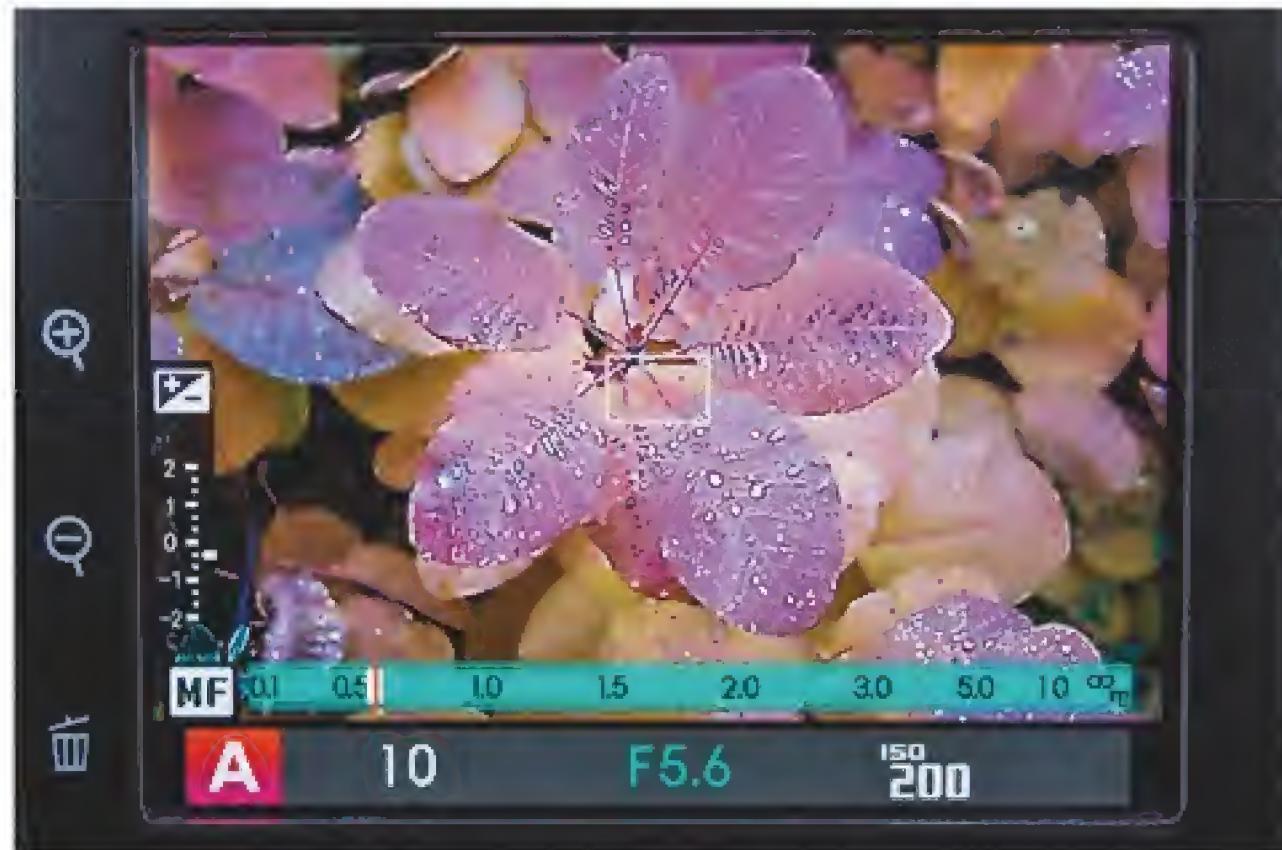
11 Compose and focus like a pro

Live View is a powerful tool when it comes to composing and focusing your images. The Virtual Horizon (the name given to this feature on Nikon DSLRs) is ideal for ensuring your camera is perfectly level. To manually focus on a specific part of the scene with precision, you can zoom in to the Live View image so that it shows at 100% allowing you to focus with confidence. The image will zoom into the area covered by the active on-screen focus point.



10 Focus with the AE-L/AF-L button

The traditional method of focusing by half depressing the shutter button is the way most photographers focus. But there is another method. Most cameras allow you to assign different settings to the function buttons (Fn) but with Nikon DSLRs you can set the AE-L/AF-L button to AF-ON, which focuses while the shutter is released in the normal way. Some photographers prefer this method because they say it's a quicker way of focusing. You be the judge.



12 Figuring out Focus Peaking on CSCs

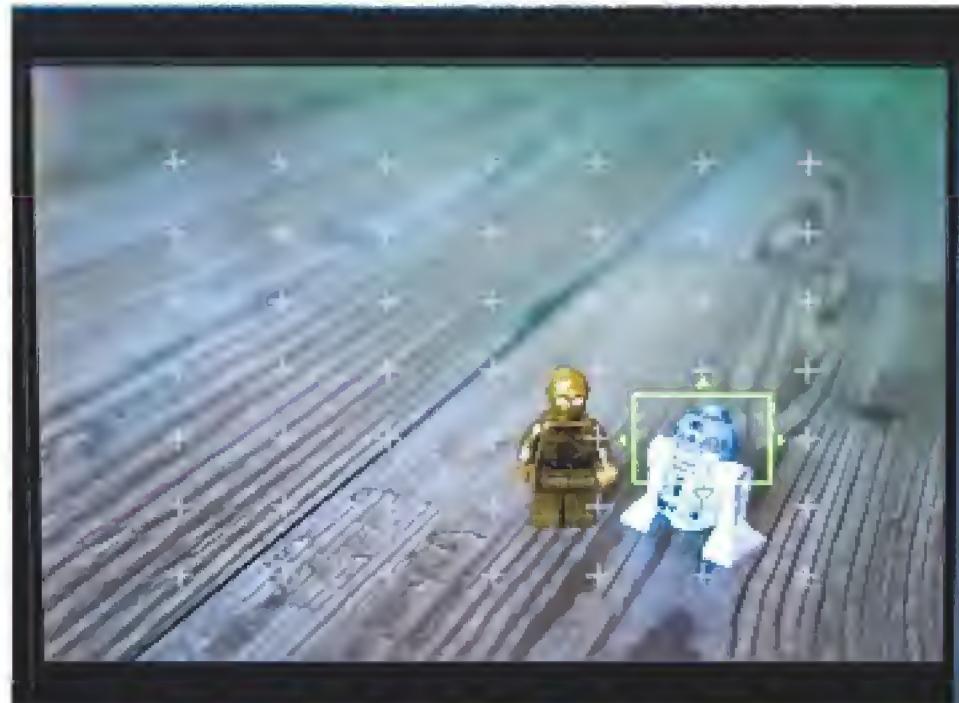
If you own a mirrorless camera or a high-end compact, you might just benefit from a manual focusing aid known as focus peaking. This feature comes from video cameras, and shows either a white or coloured highlight, depending on your camera, over the hard edges of the parts of the subject that are in focus. To get the best out of focus peaking it can be worth zooming in to the image on the LCD, or in the EVF (if your camera offers viewfinder zoom) for increased precision.

13 Use continuous focus for fast-moving subjects

When you're shooting a moving subject, setting the focus mode to continuous will drastically improve your chances of a sharp shot. With continuous focus selected, position the active focus point over the subject and half depress the shutter button. Now, as you track the subject, keep the focus point over it and the camera will continuously focus to keep it sharp as it moves towards or past you. Remember to leave a little space for your moving object to 'travel' into.

14 Avoid unwanted front and back focusing

Apart from not having control over the point of focus, the biggest downside to having Auto focus point selection turned on is that the camera may decide to focus in the wrong part of the frame. In this mode the camera will focus on what it thinks is the most prominent element in the scene, and this could be in the foreground or the background. To avoid the problem, shoot with a single focus point active so you can decide exactly where to position the active point. And don't forget to change the position of the active point for each shot to avoid further focusing errors.

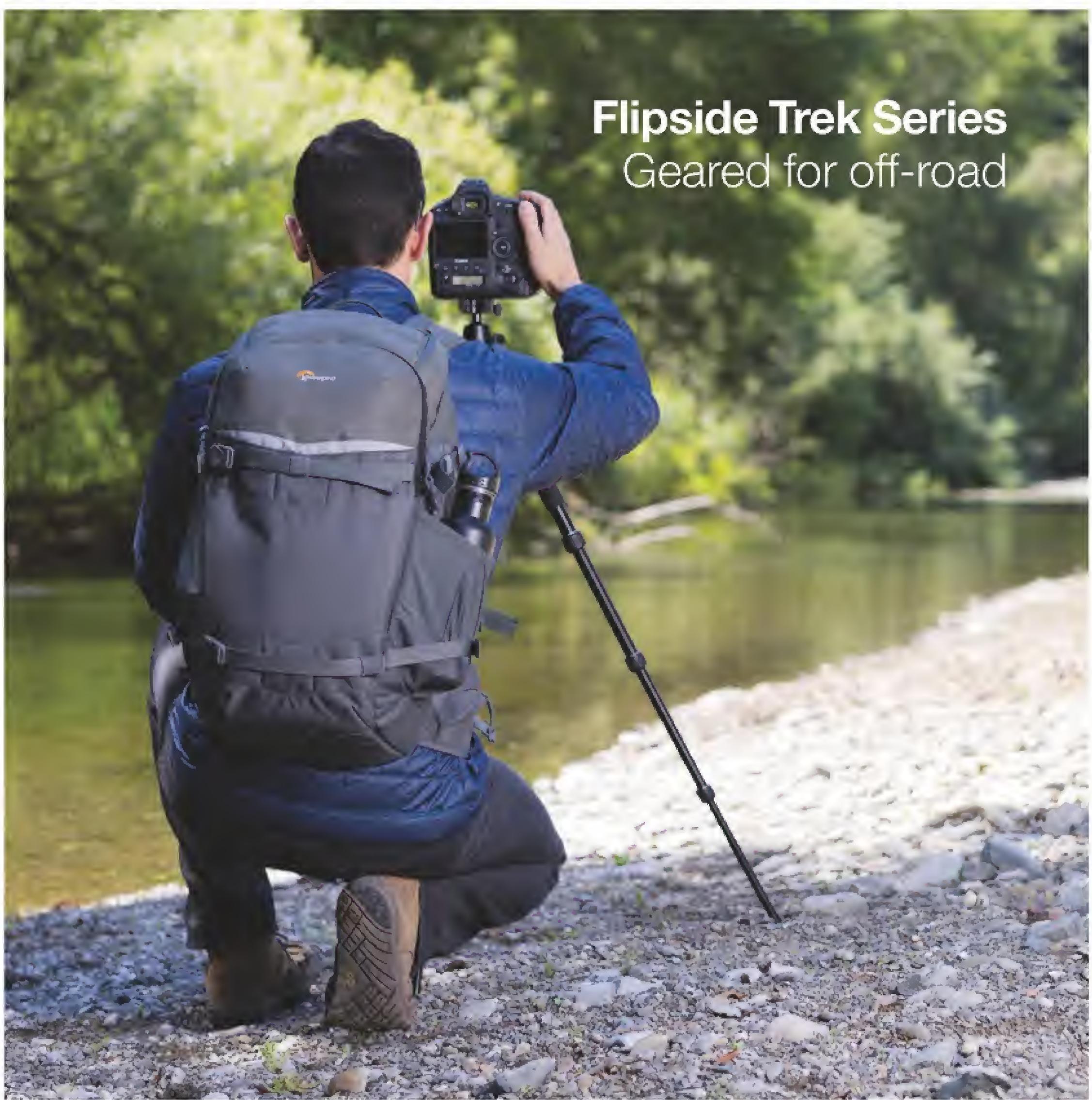


15 Adjust the size of AF points

How many times have you been lining up the active focus point over the subject and wished it could be smaller, or indeed larger? The good news is that changing AF point size is possible, particularly with mirrorless cameras. So if you would like to take more control over how your camera focuses, try adjusting AF point size.

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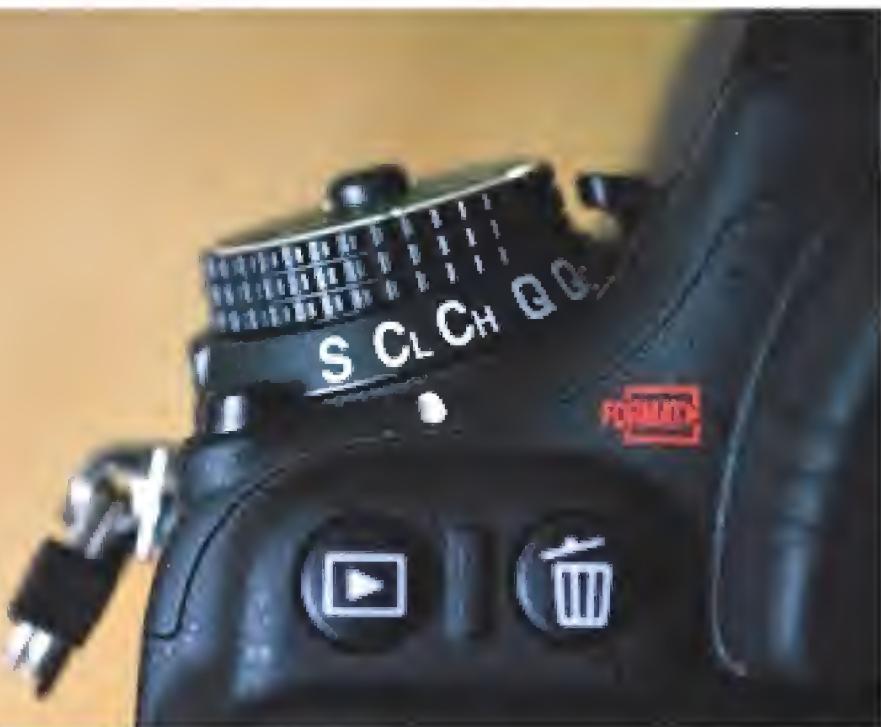
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Lenses



16 Staying sharp with shallow DOF

Fast primes are fantastic for shooting portraits. Whether you're going in close for a head and shoulders crop, or full length, the shallow depth-of-field they can create looks stunning. The difficulty comes with getting shots sharp where they should be – on the eyes. The zone of focus is so narrow that if you move a tiny amount between focusing and releasing the shutter, the point of focus is lost. One way around this is to set the camera to burst mode, and after focusing take three shots in quick succession. This will therefore triple your chances of getting a sharp shot. When shooting wide you have to shoot more frames anyway, so don't worry about having more images to sift through – it's all part of the process.



17 How to focus when a macro lens is set to minimum focus

With macro lenses you'll often want to get the most out of them by shooting at a 1:1 ratio. But when the lens is set to its minimum focus distance, what's the best way to focus? Quite simply by moving the camera a tiny amount, with your eye to the viewfinder, backwards and forwards until the subject appears sharp. This works for handheld and when shooting with the camera on a beanbag. If using a tripod you'll need a focusing plate that allows for this backwards and forwards adjustment.



18 Diffraction - what it is and how to spot it

Diffraction is when light disperses as it passes through the lens aperture, and causes images to be less sharp overall. This is more of a problem when the lens is stopped down to narrower settings such as f/22, which means that despite f/22 providing a greater depth-of-field than f/11, it's not as sharp overall. So f/11 will generally produce an image that's sharper, although depth-of-field won't be as extensive. Many landscape photographers shoot at f/11 or f/16 – because diffraction is less problematic than when stopped down fully.

19 How to find your lens sweet spot

Every lens has what's known as a 'sweet spot' – the aperture at which it produces the sharpest image. This is not to be confused with depth of field. Most lenses have a sweet spot of f/8 or f/11, and working out the exact sweet spot of your lens is easy.

Step 1 Set up your camera on a tripod to shoot a detailed object. With ISO at 100 select aperture-priority and use the central focus point to focus on the subject.

Step 2 Take a shot at each full aperture stop, and then review and compare the results on your computer with the images zoomed in at 100%. The overall sharpness of the images will reduce as you move away from the sweet spot.

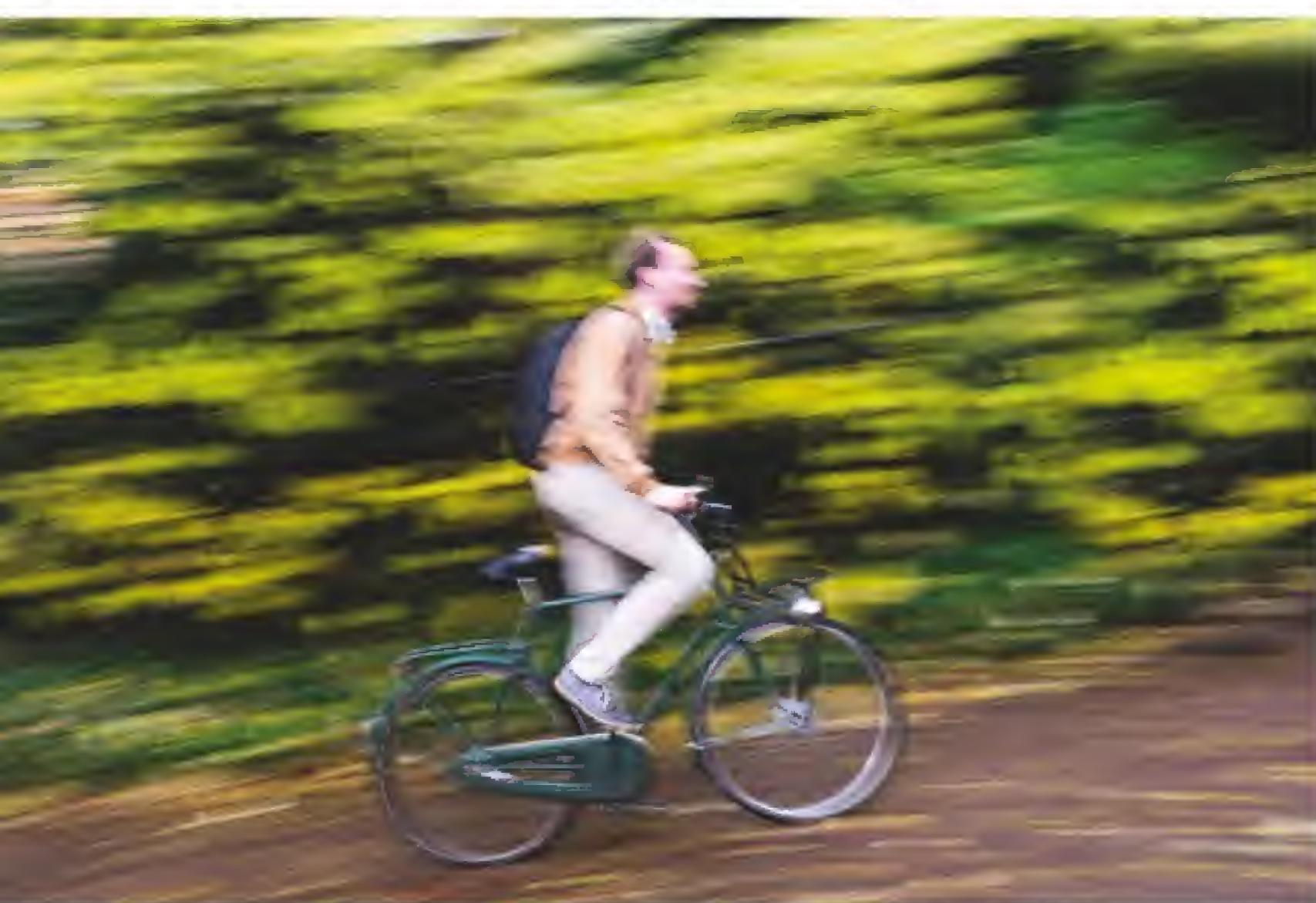


20 Spotting and correcting various types of lens distortion

Lens distortion is an issue with many lenses, but the old adage 'you get what you pay for' certainly stands strong with optics. Generally speaking, the more you pay the fewer types of distortion you'll experience. The main types to look out for are barrel distortion, where images appear to bulge out from the centre, which is most common with wideangle lenses. Pincushion distortion is the opposite; images appear to be sucked in from all four sides, and this is most common with telephoto lenses.

The most troublesome type is moustache distortion, which is a combination of barrel and pincushion; the centre bulges out, while the ends of each side of the image appear sucked back in. Fortunately this is uncommon in modern lenses, although it does exist. Finally, the other thing to look out for is chromatic aberration. This is when a lens fails to focus colours at the same convergence point, and results in coloured bands along subject edges. With the exception of moustache distortion, all of these issues can be fixed in ACR and Lightroom.

Flash and lighting



22 How to avoid heavy shadows in sunlight

It's often said that you shouldn't shoot portraits on bright sunny days because harsh shadows are created on the face. While this is true if you're simply using natural light, if you have a flash you have the ability to fill the shadows with light. To overcome the problem, shoot in aperture-priority with your flashgun set to TTL, and apply flash exposure compensation if necessary. This will help you to fill shadows in the most natural-looking way.



23 Take more control with wireless triggers

The best way to take more control over flash, and achieve creative lighting effects, is to use off-camera flash. By using wireless triggers you can fire one or more flashguns remotely, which means you can position your lights anywhere rather than being limited to the camera hotshoe. Two flashguns are all you need to achieve professional-quality studio effects on location or indoors, and don't forget that you can also use light modifiers to shape and direct the light.



24 Avoid amateur-looking flash

Shooting with flash indoors is the perfect remedy for low levels of light but take care because hard direct flash can look terrible. Bleached-out detail and hard shadows are the two main issues you'll face. With a flashgun you have the ability to tilt the head upwards, or turn it to the left or right. This means that you can aim it at the ceiling so the light bounces back down soft and diffused, or off a wall or reflector. The alternative is to use a flash diffuser such as a small softbox or a Lastolite by Manfrotto EzyBounce.



25 Off-camera flash doesn't have to be complicated

With the cost of wireless flash triggers at an all-time low, it's easy to forget that there are other ways of triggering your flashgun when it's off-camera. Optical slaves are one option, and while they're old technology they can be a lifesaver when wireless triggers decide not to work. Another option that offers speed and convenience is an off-camera cable. These allow you to use your camera in TTL mode, and take advantage of all other on-camera functionality, while enjoying the ability to add modifiers to the flashgun. You can either hold the flashgun in your left hand or mount it on a light stand. The downside to this set-up is that you're limited by the length of the cable, but you do get a quick and easy way to achieve creative lighting effects.

21 Slow sync and rear-curtain flash

A slow shutter speed and flash is a great way to emphasise movement in action shots. Setting up your camera is easy and the results will be different from the more standard approach. So how does it work? Shooting with a slow shutter speed, such as 1/30sec, is too slow to freeze movement, which is where the flash comes in. The slow shutter captures blur while the flash is used to freeze the subject.

Step 1 To shoot slow-sync flash, set the camera to shutter-priority with shutter speed at 1/30sec and ISO at 400. You may need to experiment with shutter speed depending on the subject's movement.

Step 2 Attach your flashgun to the hotshoe and make sure it's set to TTL and most importantly, set it to rear-curtain sync. In this mode the shutter opens and just before it closes the flash fires to capture blur behind the frozen subject. If you use front curtain the blur will be in front of the subject, which looks odd.



Nikon D810, Nikon 24-70mm @ 35mm,
F11 at 1 minute, 100 ISO. LEE Super Stopper.

SUPER STOPPER

Most photographers shooting land or seascapes would choose to work at either end of the day when the light is soft. This is also generally the time when the addition of a 6 or 10 stop filter will give the very long exposures necessary to give the effect of smooth water and cloud motion.

But sometimes things don't work out that way. It might be a question of tide or timing, of weather or circumstance, or even a combination of these factors, but sometimes you need to be able to shoot in broad daylight, or even bright sunlight, and still achieve those very long exposures. These are the conditions for which the 15 stop Super Stopper has been designed.

I've worked with these fishing huts in France on many an occasion, but thought it would be fun to visit on a very hot summer's day, principally to put the Super Stopper through its paces. The temperature was hovering around 37 degrees centigrade, the sky was blue and the light ferocious, giving me a shutter speed without filtration of 1/500th of a second. With the 10 stop Big Stopper that gave me a shutter speed of just 2 seconds, but with the new 15 stop Super Stopper I was able to achieve an exposure time of 1 minute.



Jonathan Chritchley
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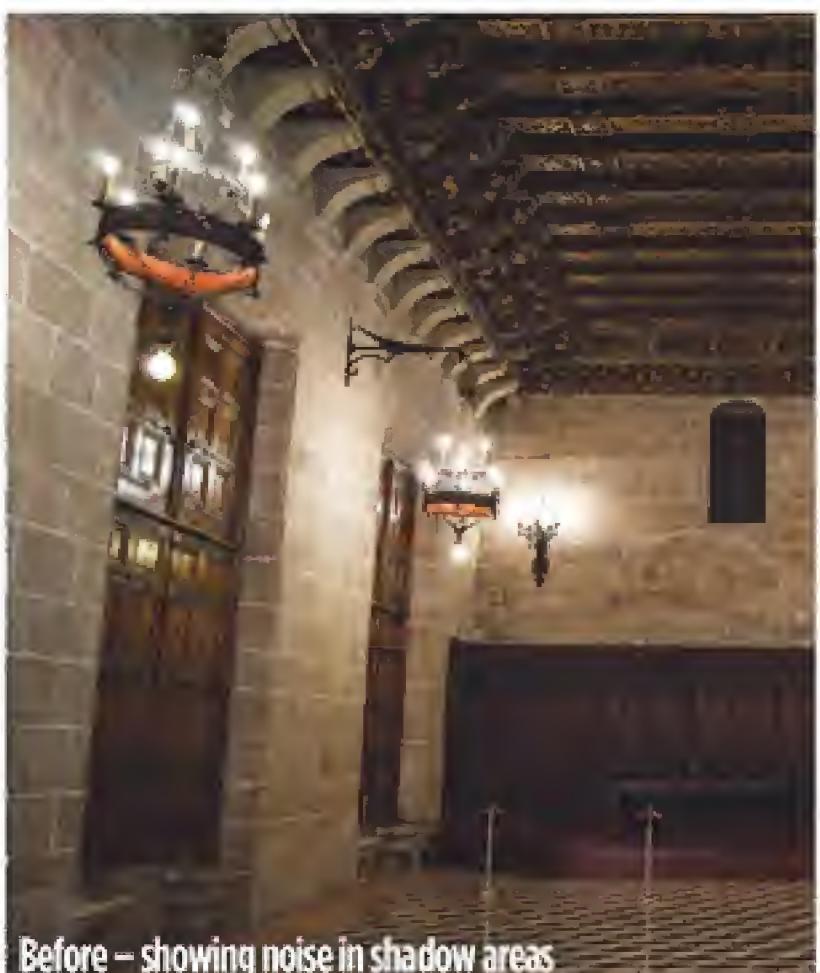


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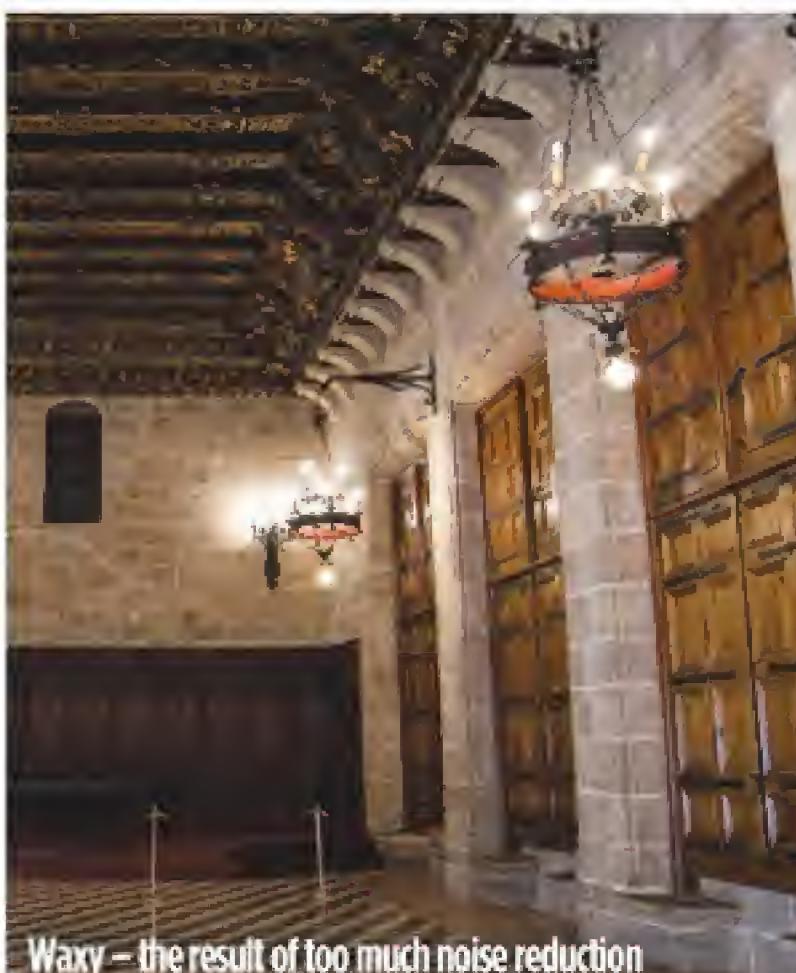
Processing & editing



After - a little noise reduction goes a long way



Before - showing noise in shadow areas



Waxy - the result of too much noise reduction

26 Correcting noise without the dreaded waxy effect

These days, cameras are excellent performers when it comes to high ISO settings but there are still times when you'll need to apply noise removal during post-processing. It's a simple process but the main aim is to avoid waxy details which are a result of applying noise reduction too strongly. In this situation, a little reserve goes a long way.

Step 1 In ACR and Lightroom locate the Noise Reduction controls and first adjust Color, which is set to 25 by default. Drag it to zero and then drag it right until the colour noise disappears – this is usually between 10 and 20.

Step 2 Drag the Luminance slider to an amount between 20 and 40. Going higher will make the image begin to appear waxy. Now you can increase the Detail slider to pull back some detail, and the Contrast slider will boost contrast in areas of continuous tone.



27 The right way to resize images for print

The easiest way to resize an image for print in Photoshop is to use the crop tool with the W x H x Resolution option selected. With this you can set the exact dimensions of the paper in inches or centimetres, and the resolution to the correct amount of 300dpi.

Step 1 Open the image to be cropped and press C on the keyboard to activate the Crop tool. Using the dropdown menu at the top left of the Photoshop window, select W x H x Resolution. Now type in the dimensions using 'in' or 'cm' after the number and then put 300 in the next box. Make sure the final dropdown option is set to px/in.

Step 2 With the image cropped to a smaller size, it's important to save a new copy so you don't overwrite and lose the original. Press Ctrl+Shift+S to open the Save As dialogue. Select JPEG as the file type, name the image and save it in a location where you can find it. Now it's ready for home printing, or at a lab.

28 The right way to resize images for web

The best way to save images for email and online use is to use the Save for Web option in Photoshop, which can be accessed using the shortcut Ctrl+Alt+Shift+S.

Step 1 When the dialogue window opens, set the file type to JPEG and make sure Progressive is checked.

Step 2 Set Quality to 70%, which will maintain image quality and drastically reduce size. Now make sure Convert to RGB is checked, and use the Metadata dropdown menu to select what information is retained in the image – Copyright and Contact Info is the most commonly used option.

Step 3 Set the Image size so that the longest edge is the desired dimension, and then click on 'save' to be taken to the save dialogue box.



Before – image lacks contrast

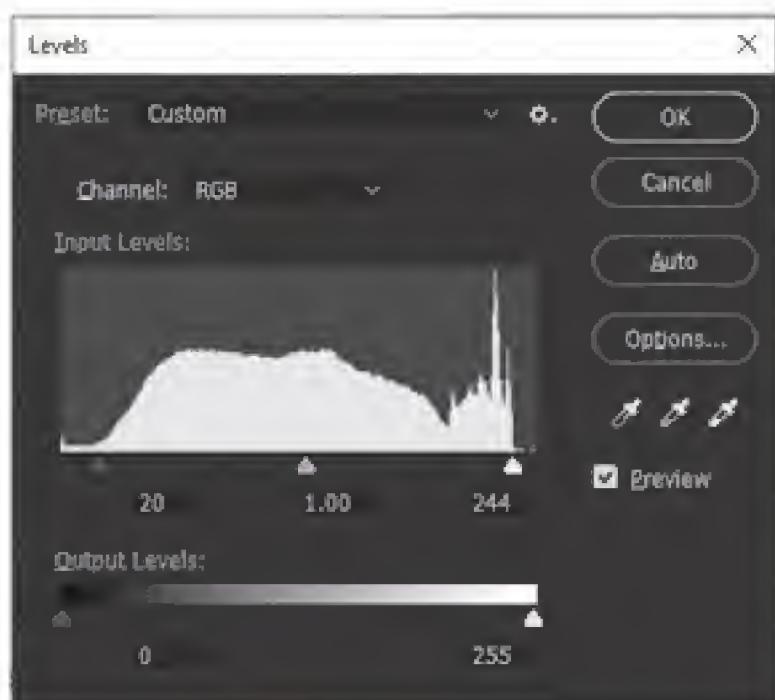
29 Fix muddiness in an instant

Whether you shoot in JPEG or raw, there's a good chance that when you get your images into Photoshop, even after a raw conversion, the contrast won't be quite where it needs to be.

Step 1 To check and fix this problem, create a Levels Adjustment Layer or simply use Levels by pressing **Ctrl+L**.

Step 2 Now drag the white and black points inwards so that they sit below the two ends of the histogram where it rises.

Step 3 Holding down the **Alt** key while dragging the points shows shadow and highlight clipping.



After – image looks less 'muddy'



30 Sharpen without creating artefacts and halos

The best way to sharpen images is to use the Sharpen controls in ACR and Lightroom. The default settings are perfect nine out of ten times. However, there will be instances when you need to sharpen shots in Photoshop, so here's how to use Unsharp Mask without creating halos.

Step 1 Go to the main Photoshop menu and select **Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask**. When the dialogue box opens, set Radius to 2.0 Pixels and then drag the Amount slider to the right until the image looks sharp, but not so far that halos appear.

Step 2 Set Threshold to 5-10 pixels. Threshold smooths out the sharpening effect, but applying too much counteracts sharpening. Now see if you can increase the Amount without creating artefacts or halos, and hit **OK** when you're done.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Wedded bliss

I am a keen hobbyist photographer, but recently lost my job and could do with earning a bit of extra cash in 2017. I am thinking about setting up as a part-time wedding photographer, and I wondered how feasible you think this is in this day and age where everyone has a camera? How much do you reckon I would need to spend on camera gear and what is the best way to learn some skills?

Wendy Laughland

While the wedding photography business is very competitive, there's nothing to stop you having a go. A good option might be to go on a course, as falling fees and increased competition mean that fewer and fewer pros now use 'second shooters', which used to be a good way to learn the ropes. Aspire Photography Training (www.aspirephotographytraining.co.uk) and the RPS (www.rps.org) run good courses for beginners. The Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers (www.swpp.co.uk) is also on hand for advice. As for gear,



Wedding photography can be very demanding in low light. You'll require a camera with an excellent noise response at high ISO

get the best camera you can afford, and make sure you have a choice of lenses – ideally a wideangle prime lens for group shots, a versatile 24-70mm zoom for the service and a 50 or 85mm for close-up portraits. A flashgun comes in handy for indoor bounce flash, or be prepared to use high ISOs in gloomy churches. When it comes to advertising, word of mouth tends to work best, but experiment with other options such as social media or bridal magazines. Good luck! – **Geoff Harris, deputy editor (and wedding photographer)**



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Sony Alpha 99 II?

With the Sony A99 II having been freely available in the UK for several weeks now, I am puzzled why there have been no magazine or expert user tests appearing in print or online. Is Sony imposing an embargo, so as not to distract interest from its favoured line, E Mount? Or can we expect comprehensive tests to appear in the media? If so, when?

**Martin Christopher,
via email**

Sony is not imposing any embargo on the Alpha 99 II, but review units have only recently become available in the UK. Unfortunately we haven't been able to fit it into our busy schedule yet,

but we expect to cover the camera fully in early 2017
– **Andy Westlake,
technical editor**

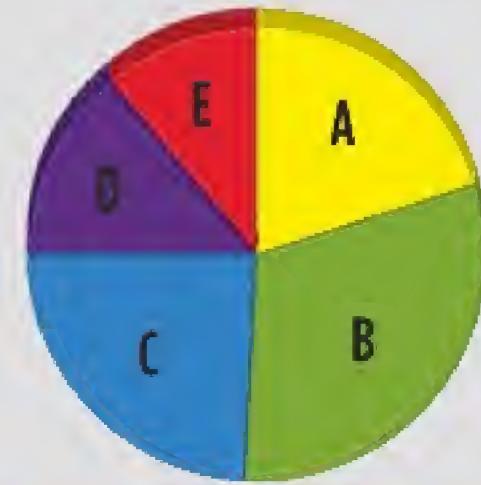
In praise of raw

I thought I would give a prime example of why raw is better to use than JPEG. I recently bought a second-hand Nikon D700 and I thought I would give it a good testing as I only had three months' guarantee on it. I took my D700 to Buckfast Abbey in Devon along with a 50mm prime lens. I had a lovely day putting the camera through its paces and was pleased that everything was in order.

However, imagine my surprise when I got

home and loaded my images onto my PC for processing to find that they all had a green tint. On exploring my camera I found that the previous owner had the white balance set for what looked to be photography at midnight in a coal mine. I knew then that I had to go into some post-editing overtime to change the white balance on all my shots – something I could not have done if

It's always worth checking your settings



In AP 10 December, we asked...

Do you like to shoot portraits of your family?

You answered...

A Yes, they're one of my main photographic subjects	20%
B Yes, but mostly on special occasions	31%
C No, I prefer other subjects	24%
D No, they don't like having their pictures taken	14%
E No, I use photography to get away from them!	11%

What you said

'I've answered "no" as my family has never been too keen on being on the receiving end of my hobby. Your article about Amy Drucker (AP, 10 December) was a treat.'

'We have many family photos on display, most, but not all, taken by me. Years ago my wife persuaded me to have a family portrait taken by a professional photographer in his studio. I thought, why pay someone when I could do it myself? However, I'm glad we did, as it's an excellent shot.'

'Some of us don't need pictures to remind us of the people we love. A lack of pictures raises no questions in my mind.'

'I don't do "portraits" in the sense of making premeditated records, but the family album is important to us so I take pictures of the family as a routine activity.'

Join the debate on the AP forum

This week we ask

Apart from magazines, where do you turn to for help with your photography problems?

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Top news stories

What's trending on the AP website

Amateur Photographer

Fujifilm introduce new X-A10 mirrorless camera
New budget interchangeable lens offering from Fuji has similar features to the older X-A1, but with some changes to the body to hit a lower price point.



- 1 Fujifilm announces the X-A10
- 2 Brooklyn Beckham to release debut book of photography
- 3 David Hamilton found dead
- 4 Tory aide told to cover notes by photographer
- 5 Winner of Arcaid Architectural Photography award

they were in JPEG format. The lesson to be learned here is that you should always reset your camera settings after each shoot. In this instance, I am on the side of raw, not JPEG.

Graham Rogers, Cornwall

Of course shooting raw allows more scope to deal with this kind of situation when the camera is inadvertently configured incorrectly. Shooting JPEG simply requires more consideration for making sure your settings are right before you start – Andy Westlake, technical editor

A uniform outlook

You opened yourself up to a non-photographic comment by mentioning the disadvantages of school uniforms in the Taylor Wessing story (News, AP 3 December), as there are definite advantages to the uniforms. I'm a retired paediatrician in the USA where studies have shown better learning and behaviour in schools with uniforms. Furthermore, given the gang violence that begins in the pre-teenage years in the USA, it's a matter of safety. A child of this age dressed in the wrong colour in much of this country is subject to beating or worse at the

hands of the rival gang. Of course, the pervasiveness of gun possession here makes this worse, but let's not get into that issue in a UK photo magazine! They probably do suppress individuality, but uniforms can literally save a teenager's life in the USA.

Steve Jacobs MD, USA

You raise an interesting point. One of the central arguments against school uniforms is that it stifles creativity and individual expression. On the other hand, many would argue that when children dress the same they're placed on a level playing field. Issues that involve the raising and education of children can be divisive (witness the recently reported banning of *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Huckleberry Finn* in some US schools), as I'm sure you know from experience. At the very least, an image like the one featured in Taylor Wessing can inspire debate on an issue that many of us would take for granted

– Oliver Atwell, senior features writer

Good background

I like to do a lot of street photography but I struggle a lot to get nice backgrounds – there's usually a lot going on

behind my subject. How much of a problem is this anyway, though, as surely street photography is supposed to be realistic and natural. If there are bins or mess in the background, does it matter?

Steve Foster

This is a very good question. The whole point of keeping the background clear and uncluttered is to focus attention on your subject and create a more pleasing composition, as you say. Photojournalists often manage to do this in the middle of chaotic war zones or natural disasters, as experience has taught them to move (either themselves or their camera) until they find the best angle. Static objects like bins and parked cars are indeed distractions, and you should be able to shoot from a different point to avoid them – or use a longer lens and/or wide aperture to render them out of focus. At the end of the day though a scene needs to look real, not staged, and better a bit of clutter in the background of an otherwise great street shot than no shot at all. Don't obsess about background so much that you miss the image

– Geoff Harris, deputy editor

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In next week's issue

Winter wildlife

Don't miss our complete wildlife photography guide to make sure you get the best out of the season

Get your kit on

The best jackets for photographers

In the bag

What six Magnum photographers can't do without in their kit bags



Food Glorious Food

10 commandments of food photography

ROUND THREE
NOW OPEN!



AFOY



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Amateur Filmmaker of the Year competition

Your chance to enter the UK's best competition for budding amateur filmmakers

ROUND Three of our Amateur Filmmaker of the Year (AFOY) competition for 2017 is now open. AFOY challenges you to get creative with your filmmaking, and gives you the opportunity to win some fantastic prizes worth more than £13,000 in total.

The competition is split into three rounds, each with its own

theme: Travel, Environment and People. To enter, submit a video no more than five minutes in length, of HD quality. You can shoot on any camera, and the content and editing are up to you – so long as it fits the round's theme (see below).

Visit www.thvideomode.com to view the top videos, as well as

the scores and a leaderboard for the overall competition. The winner will be the entrant with most points after three rounds, who will win the overall prize and the title Amateur Filmmaker of the Year 2017.

Round Three (People) is open now and when entering, make sure you fulfil the brief.

Round Three: People

You could shoot a documentary about a person and their life, or you could turn it into a spoof. It could be an interview with someone telling their story, interspersed with images and video clips, or you might like to view people in general by looking at different characters, ages and races.

Rounds and dates

Below is a list of the rounds, their themes and the dates you need to know. To view the results, visit www.thvideomode.com. Don't forget you will also be judged on creativity and technical excellence.

Theme	Opens	Closes
Round One: Travel	1 Sept	31 Oct
Round Two: Environment	1 Nov	31 Dec
Round Three: People	1 Jan	28 Feb

The overall winner will be announced in March 2017

Prizes

Enter to win your share of prizes worth more than £13,000!

Round One

Winner

Canon XC10+
Directional Mic DM-E1
Worth £2,000

Runner-Up

Canon LEGRIA Mini X
Worth £300

Round Two

Winner

Canon EOS 7D Mark II, EF 24-105mm f/4L IS USM, EF 50mm f/1.8 STM and EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM
Worth £2,475

Runner-Up Canon Directional Mic DM-E1 Worth £274.99

Round Three

Winner

Canon EOS 5D Mark III and EF 24-105mm f/4L IS USM
Worth £3,199

Runner-Up
Canon Directional Mic DM-E1
Worth £274.99

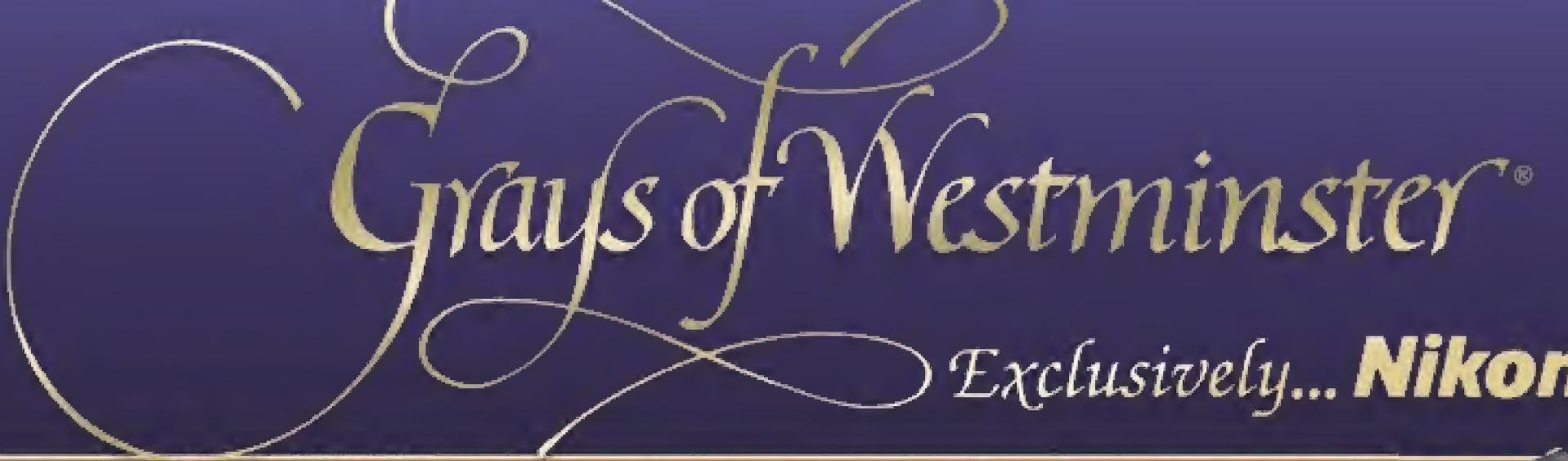
Overall prize Canon EOS C100 Mark II and 24-105mm Worth £4,625

Visit www.thvideomode.com/afoypeople
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The Seahorse

by Marco Gargiulo

Underwater photographer **Marco Gargiulo** discusses his incredible shot of a seahorse taken at Santa Caterina Beach in Naples

This image of a maned seahorse was taken at Santa Caterina Beach in Sant'Agnello in Naples, Italy. Specifically, it was a photograph that was taken during an early morning dive with my friend Domenico Roscigno, another underwater photographer. It was 2 January 2014 and we set out to revel in the first dive of a brand-new year.

We decided to go to this particular location in search of seahorses, which can often be found drifting around in the warm ocean under a brilliant sun. As soon as I entered the water I set myself up by a



'Not only was this dive the first of the year it was also the 40th anniversary of my first dive'

little one at 4.5in. It's called a Mini Dome and is used to shoot macro images that require a wide angle, as you can see in this image of the seahorse.

I've used a variety of equipment during my time as a photographer. My main kit tends to consist of a Nikon D800E, a Nikon D7200, an Isotta housing, two Inon Z-240 strobes and two Sea & Sea YS-D1 strobes.

In terms of camera settings for this shot, the camera was set to 1/320sec at f/16 and ISO 100. The lighting in the image was created using my two Inon Z-240 strobes, which were fibre-optically wired but set to manual mode. This allowed me to get maximum power from them to light the details of the seahorse and ocean foliage, as well as having the sun behind it, which is crucial to the overall feeling of the shot.

It's not a surprise that I turned to underwater photography. I was born in Naples in 1968 to Henry and Maria Rosaria, who are both accomplished and world-renowned underwater photographers. I started diving with an aqua lung in the summer of 1974, swimming around the Mediterranean and exploring the secret life and habitat of the creatures that swam in the water and crawled along the seabed. In fact, not only was this dive with the seahorse the first of the year, it was also the 40th anniversary of my first dive.

In 1979 I started taking the idea of underwater photography seriously. I was 11 years old and I'd go diving with my brother. My first shots were taken with a Nikonos II 35mm SLR, an underwater camera made by Nikon between 1968 and 1975. It was a camera that could be taken to depths of around 50m, so was more than adequate for my needs. For the next few years I entered various little competitions here and there with varying degrees of success. I also collaborated with a number of magazines by publishing articles about marine biology and travel photography. I'm very proud to say that I'm a member of the Italian Underwater Photography Society, and I also act as the webmaster, editor and moderator of their website (www.iups.it). 

rock and checked my underwater camera to ensure that the strobes were operating correctly. As soon as I put my eye up to the viewfinder I saw a seahorse hovering around the red algae on the ocean floor. Immediately, the little fish started to move from the bottom and started to swim forward to another position. I swam a little forward to get in close with my camera. As soon as I was comfortably in position I started to shoot off several images of the seahorse swimming through the frame, with the sun's rays penetrating the ocean's surface and spilling into the background. It was such a simple shot and

over so quickly. But it really was a magical situation and a signal of a good and lucky year to come!

The image was taken using a Nikon D800E inside an Isoteen Isotta camera housing. Isoteen is an Italian company that produces housing and strobes for underwater photography. It has been around for many years, since 1980 in fact, and offers lots of products, many of which I've used throughout my photographic life. That morning I was using a Tokina 10-17mm lens at 17mm to obtain a full frame image on my FX camera using a DX lens. I also had a dome port with me, just a

Marco Gargiulo



Born in 1968, Marco Gargiulo is a hobbyist underwater photographer and a marine biologist. He has been diving since he was six years old and started taking pictures in 1979. www.marcogargiulo.com

Pictures from America

Alex Noriega may be relatively new to competitions, but he's already established himself as an award winner. As the 2016 US Landscape Photographer of the Year he offers some thoughts on his work

I have to say, it feels good to be crowned the 2016 US Landscape Photographer of the Year. Before this, I had only entered one competition, and that was a few years back. This year, I entered US LPOTY and the 2016 Epson International Pano Awards, and happened to win both.

People often wonder what the real benefit of entering photography competitions is and for me, first and foremost, that benefit takes the form of the cash prizes. But don't get me wrong – I'm not a materialistic person. I'm not the kind of guy who's going to rush out and spend all the winnings on 'stuff'. I see money as freedom – more freedom to go on adventures and create photographic images. On another level, a contest such as US

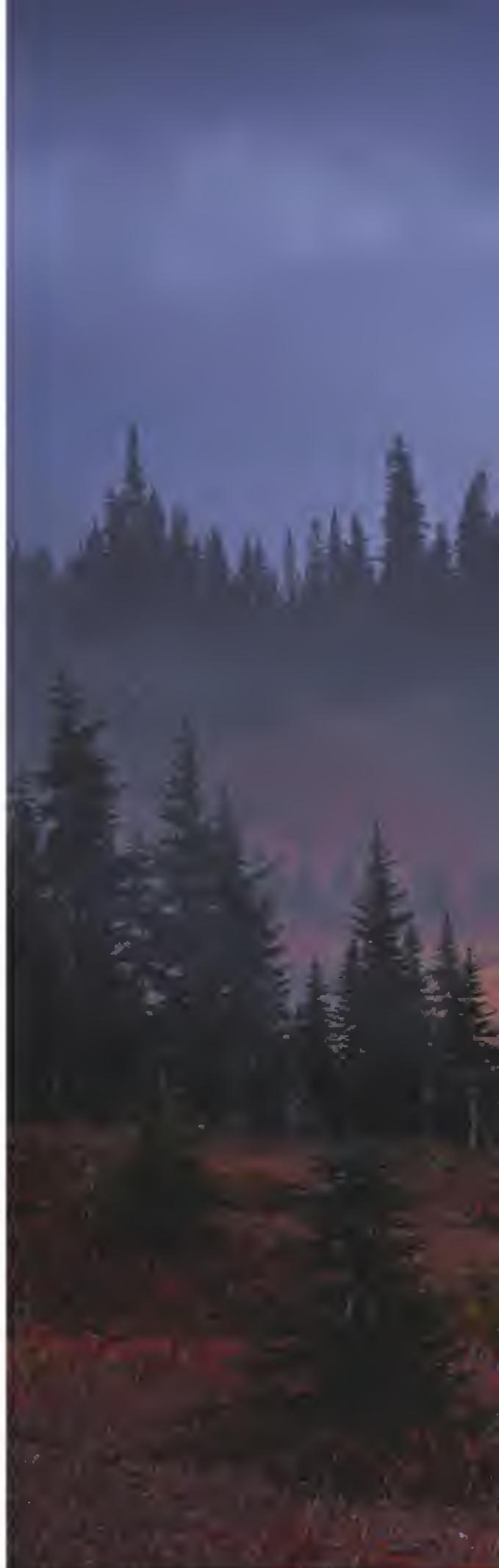
Alex's US Landscape Photographer of the Year image of Mount Rainier in Washington
Nikon D600, Nikon 24-85mm VR, 1/320sec at f/16, ISO 100

One of his winning images from the 2016 Epson International Pano Awards – taken in Utah
Nikon D600, Nikon 70-200mm f/4 VR, 10secs at f/11, ISO 100

LPOTY also brings a lot of exposure on social media, so that is an obvious business benefit, and I always like my work being seen by more people.

Winning landscapes

The shot of mine that took the top prize of the 2016 US LPOTY competition shows the sunrise illuminating Mount Rainier as it rises above low clouds, seen from high above Tipsoo Lake, Washington state. I'm very familiar with Mount Rainier and its different aspects, and I knew that I liked the heavily glaciated east side, and the autumn tundra foliage to be found on the ground. Plus, you've got the craggy midground with its propensity to be filled with low clouds. I didn't want a straight





reflection shot lacking a midground, so I hiked high above the lakes and used a longer focal length (35mm). There was one precise spot I found to stand where the lake would reflect the mountain, and the whole scene was cradled symmetrically by the rows of trees, while showing off the foliage in the foreground. The fog and light are what made the shot, giving the image a clear hierarchy and sense of depth. I wanted that early light on the highly reflective east-facing glaciers on the mountain, so I knew a sunrise would be superior. Even if something amazing happened at sunset, it would merely be a silhouette of the mountain against the backlit sky.

What makes a successful landscape image tends to vary from photographer to photographer. On a very basic level, I want to instil some sort of emotion in the viewer.

Often that reaction is 'I want to be there', but that generally happens with wider scenes with a real sense of place. Maybe it's just a sense of wonder about the size of the landscape or the realisation of how long it took to form. Landscapes can show us how small we are, or inspire us to get out and explore our world, rather than sitting in front of glowing rectangles all day. If we're talking about a tighter abstract-type image, maybe the goal is to confuse the viewer, and keep them guessing at what exactly they're looking at, while still being visually pleasing and interesting.

Finding your style

Looking back at everything I've learned so far, I think perhaps the most valuable lesson I've learned is to find my own voice. The work I care least about (and have purged from my portfolios as I continually



**Grand Canyon,
Arizona**

Nikon D600, Nikon
16-35mm f/4 VR,
10 sec at f/22,
ISO 50

curate) is the work where I was attempting to emulate other artists. That's a good way to learn, but eventually you've got to have your own style, and your own purpose and drive to make the images other than 'someone else shot that and it's pretty, so I should do it too'.

When I've attempted to emulate others, or had tunnel vision for a certain type of image, that's when I've found myself fail. It's



KIT CHOICE

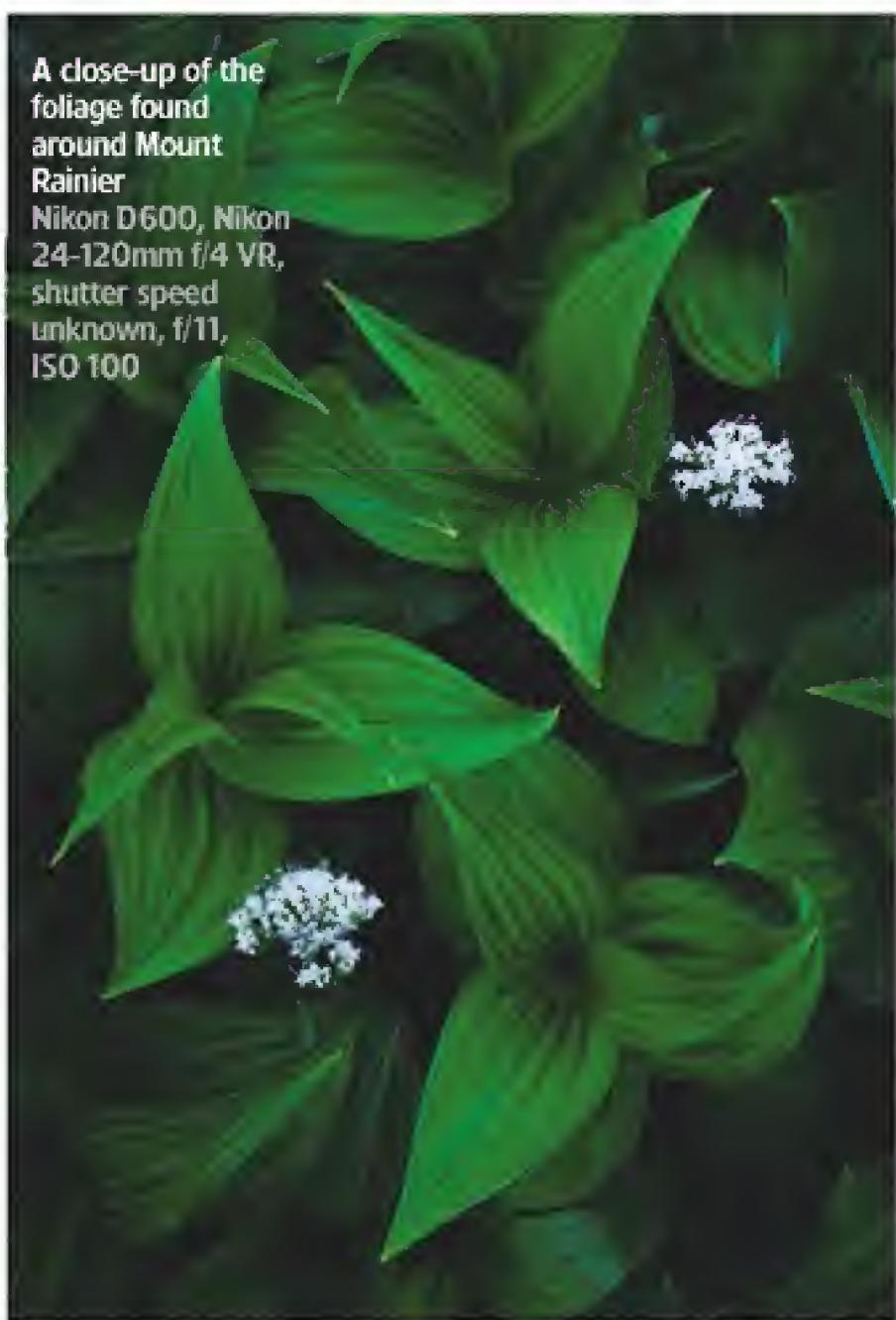
The lens that I've been using a lot of recently is the Nikon f/4G 70-200mm VR on a Nikon D600 camera. I seem to be using that a lot more than my wider lenses. I find it more difficult to come up with something that doesn't feel formulaic with the wideangles. I've been excluding skies altogether in a lot of my recent photography.

Accessories wise, I'm a photographer who tends to travel light. I don't really use filters or accessories. I usually just have the camera, lens and a Really Right Stuff TQC-14 tripod. I couldn't do without an L-plate on the camera, but that's part of the main tripod support system and not a mere accessory. I also use a shutter release/remote, but using a two- or five-second timer is just as effective in most cases.



A close-up of the foliage found around Mount Rainier

Nikon D600, Nikon 24-120mm f/4 VR, shutter speed unknown, f/11, ISO 100





A shot from Mount Rainier, Washington
Nikon D7000, Nikon
12-24mm f/4,
1/40sec at f/13,
ISO 200

► easy and lazy to go and grab an image you've seen before, but it's much more difficult to find something original. Sure, blend your influences and take bits and pieces from the artists you love, but make your own product out of it. Whenever I've failed to be original, after I realise my mistake, it gives me the inspiration to go back and try again to find my own unique interpretation of a place.

Don't be afraid to experiment. A lot of people new to photography, as with many forms of technology or art, are afraid to try things that might not be 'correct'. Don't worry about being proper from the start. Just try a lot of different things as they come to you. You'll have plenty of time to learn the 'rules', to the extent that they even actually exist.

Looking for locations

Research is a pretty key factor when you're thinking of going out to shoot landscape photographs. Google Images is a nice resource for tourist snapshots of an area, allowing you to see the possibilities for fine art images. I've recently tried to avoid seeing other photographers' images of an area before visiting, so that I don't get tunnel vision about what not to copy or about what works at the location. For what I've been working on lately, Google Earth and hiking books have been a good



Alex Noriega is a landscape photographer based in the western United States. To see more of his images, or for information on post-processing instruction, workshops, prints, or licensing, visit www.alexnoriega.com.

Another of Alex's images from the 2016 Epson International Pano Awards – Mount Whitney, California
Nikon D600, Nikon
70-300mm VR,
1/80sec at f/11,
ISO 100

start. Really, you just need to show up somewhere once you decide on a place, and start looking.

When I'm researching a location, the first thing I look for is solitude. I'm done shooting the same thing as others and jockeying tripod legs, unless it's my friends or clients along with me. I do my best work when I'm alone and I can really explore and concentrate without getting in anyone's way, or vice versa. Next, I'm looking for possibilities for composition – just interesting attributes of the landscape to work with (see the Mount Rainier image). If you look at a place like an overlook at the Grand Canyon, sure, that's an amazing view. But there aren't tons of possibilities, as you aren't able to change your perspective much, and the scene is so dependent on conditions. I like places that have something to work with in any type of light; both small and large scenes.

In terms of light, I'm not that big a fan of spring and summer. I'm much more drawn to autumn and winter scenes. Snow can be so amazing, as is autumn foliage, and especially if you get the two combined. For light, you won't find many blazing sunsets or sunrises in my portfolio. I love golden, dappled storm light with a dark sky as a backdrop. Fog is always a favourite, too, as it gives many scenes depth.

AP



Custom menu secrets



PART ONE

Nikon

Continuing our series unlocking the secrets of the custom menu, **Matt Golowczynski** looks at getting your exposures spot on, speeding up autofocus, and boosting battery life on a Nikon DSLR



Matt Golowczynski

Matt is a London-based journalist and photographer. A former technical editor for *What Digital Camera*, he has contributed to a range of magazines over the past ten years and graduated from the University of Westminster with a BSc in Photography and Digital Imaging. You can see more of his work at www.mattgolowczynski.com.

NIKON'S current crop of DSLRs features an exhaustive range of custom options, which only seems to grow with each new release. Some items that appear in the Custom Menu are rather cryptically titled, which can make them easy to gloss over, but once you appreciate what you can adjust, you may find your camera is far better suited to your needs.

The following pages don't allow for the full range of current Custom Menu options to be explored – there are simply too many (and some are too niche to warrant much of our attention). Using the D750 DSLR as my guide, I've selected arguably the most useful options to give you a taste of what's possible.

a AUTOFOCUS

a Autofocus	
	a1 AF-C priority selection
	a2 AF-S priority selection
	a3 Focus tracking with lock-on
	a4 Focus point display
	a5 Focus point illumination
	a6 Focus point wrap-around
	a7 Number of focus points
	a8 Store points by orientation

a1. AF-C priority selection

Normally, when your camera is set to autofocus, it won't capture an image until focus has been confirmed. In some situations you may prefer to let the camera take the shot even if it hasn't confirmed focus, as it may still be roughly in focus and perfectly usable. This option lets you override the default setting so that the images are captured as soon as the shutter-release button is pressed down fully.

a Autofocus	
	a1 AF-C priority selection
	a2 AF-S priority selection
	a3 Focus tracking with lock-on
	a4 Focus point display
	a5 Focus point illumination
	a6 Focus point wrap-around
	a7 Number of focus points
	a8 Store points by orientation

a7. Number of focus points

If you find the focusing array too slow to navigate you can reduce the number of selectable focusing points. On a Nikon DSLR with 51 points, you will typically have the option to reduce this to 11 points. This will help you to move from one side of the array to the other at speed, so it's potentially quite useful if you frequently find yourself having to manually adjust the focusing point and find the default setup surplus to your needs.

a Autofocus	
	a9 Built-in AF-assist illuminator
	b1 ISO sensitivity step value
	b2 EV steps for exposure cntrl
	b3 Easy exposure compensation
	b4 Matrix metering
	b5 Center-weighted area
	b6 Fine-tune optimal exposure
	c1 Shutter-release button AE-L

a9. Built-in AF-assist illuminator

While the AF-assist illuminator can be useful for speeding up autofocus in low light, the beam it emits can be frowned upon when shooting weddings, corporate events or live performances. You can disable the lamp when you find yourself in these situations, but be aware that the camera may find focus more slowly, or not at all.

a Autofocus	
	a1 AF-C priority selection
	a2 AF-S priority selection
	a3 Focus tracking with lock-on
	a4 Focus point display
	a5 Focus point illumination
	a6 Focus point wrap-around
	a7 Number of focus points
	a8 Store points by orientation

a6. Focus point wrap-around

If your camera has a high number of focusing points, it can be frustrating to move from one end of the array to the other. You can speed this up by pressing OK to return the point to the centre, but selecting focus point wrap-around allows you to return the point back to the opposite end of the array once you reach one end. So, pressing the button to move right at the edge of the right-hand side will move the point back to the left-hand side, while pressing the up button when at the top of the array will move the point to the bottom of the array (and, in each case, vice versa).



b METERING/EXPOSURE

b Metering/exposure

a9 Built-in AF-assist illuminator	ON
b1 ISO sensitivity step value	1/3
b2 EV steps for exposure cntrl	1/3
b3 Easy exposure compensation	OFF
b4 Matrix metering	ON
b5 Center-weighted area	(•)12
b6 Fine-tune optimal exposure	--
c1 Shutter-release button AE-L	OFF

It can be a good idea to change the diameter of the centre-weighted area when you are shooting portraits



b5. Centre-weighted area

If you tend to rely on centre-weighted metering, perhaps for portraiture or flower photography, you may alternate between subjects that fill varying proportions of the frame. This in turn affects how much of them your camera will use for metering, so you may wish to vary the diameter of the centre-weighted area so that it better suits your subject - a larger area when capturing portraits, for example.

c TIMERS/AE LOCK

c Timers/AE lock

Standby timer	6s
c3 Self-timer	--
c4 Monitor off delay	--
c5 Remote on duration (ML-L3)	1m
d1 Beep	--
d2 Continuous low-speed	• 3
d3 Max. continuous release	100
d4 Exposure delay mode	OFF

c2. Standby timer

This option lets you reduce the amount of time that the camera continues to meter the scene while not being operated in any way, which in turn helps to conserve battery life.



c Timers/AE lock

c2 Standby timer	6s
c3 Self-timer	--
c4 Monitor off delay	--
c5 Remote on duration (ML-L3)	1m
d1 Beep	--
d2 Continuous low-speed	• 3
d3 Max. continuous release	100
d4 Exposure delay mode	OFF

c Timers/AE lock

c2 Standby timer	6s
c3 Self-timer	--
c4 Monitor off delay	--
c5 Remote on duration (ML-L3)	1m
d1 Beep	--
d2 Continuous low-speed	• 3
d3 Max. continuous release	100
d4 Exposure delay mode	OFF

c3. Self-timer

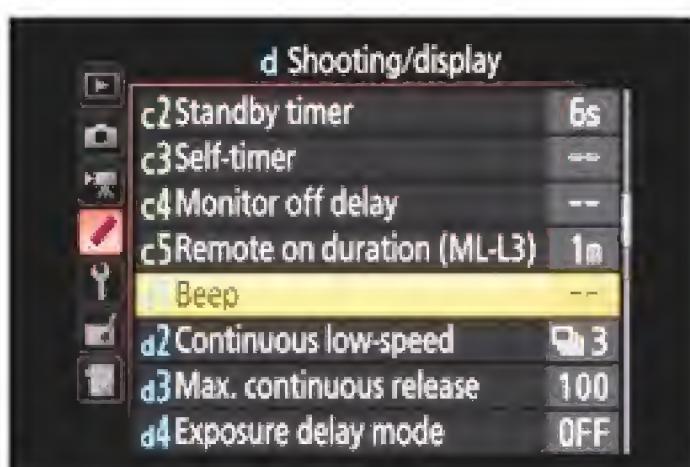
This option allows you to adjust the delay between pressing the shutter-release button and the image being captured. It also enables you to specify how many images are captured, and the interval between them. You may, for example, choose a long duration when capturing group shots that include yourself.

c4. Monitor off delay

Your camera is programmed to deactivate the rear LCD panel after a specific length of time when the camera is not being operated. You may choose to lengthen this period if you're relying on the Info screen to make exposure calculations, for example; or you may want to shorten this to conserve battery life.

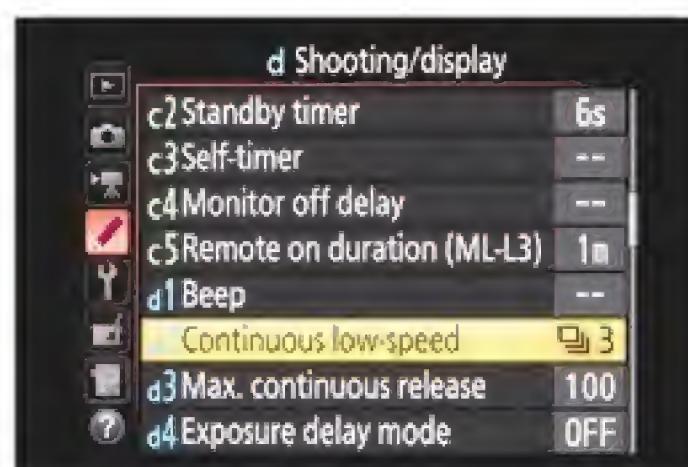


d SHOOTING/DISPLAY



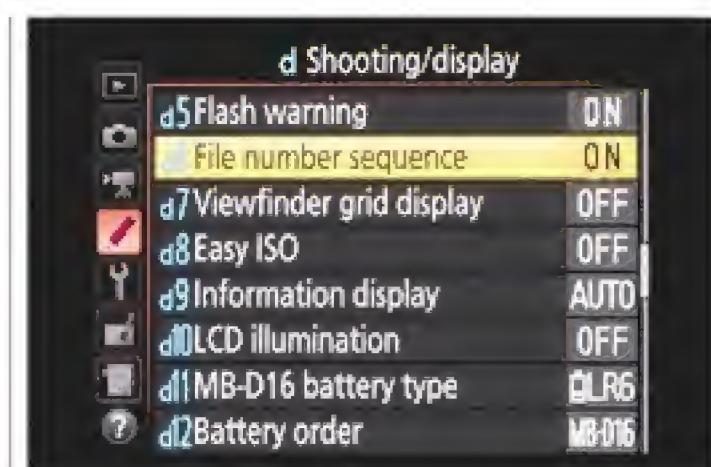
d1. Beep

Another tool designed to help you operate your camera discreetly, the beep option lets you change the pitch of the camera's confirmation beep over two levels, and the volume over three. It can also be disabled. You may wish to adjust this during a wedding, or generally when photographing in places of worship. In such situations, you may also want to call upon the camera's Quiet shutter option for the same reason.



d2. Continuous low-speed

It's not always necessary to use the fastest burst rate when capturing action, particularly for subjects moving at only a moderate pace such as live performers or wildlife. You may find all this does is fill your card with images too similar to each other. You can use this option to adjust the Continuous Low frame rate to the speed of your choice, which will leave the CL high option for when the fastest frame rate is required.



d6. File number sequence

This option allows you to specify what happens to the file-numbering sequence when you use a new memory card, format one, or create a new folder. The On setting picks up numbering from the last captured image and creates a folder once you exceed 9,999 images. If you create a new folder each time you begin a new session, you may prefer to use the Off option to ensure that the first frame is always numbered 0001.jpg or 0001.NEF.

f CONTROLS



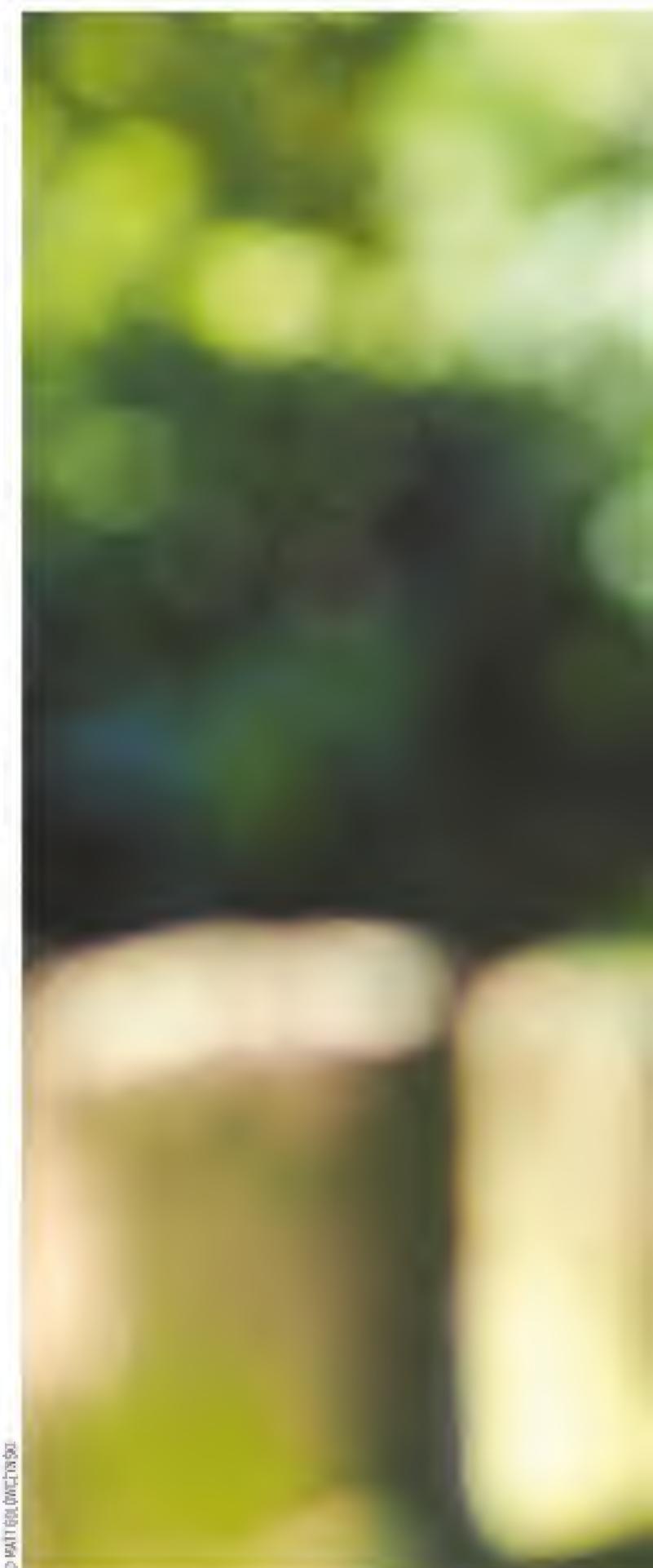
f2. Assign Fn button

Most enthusiast-level and pro-level DSLRs allow for individual buttons to have their functions changed, and the primary function button on the front of a Nikon body is ideally placed for a commonly used setting.



f8. Reverse indicators

If you would prefer the exposure scale visible in the viewfinder and on the camera's LCD screens to show positive values on the left and negative ones on the right, you can switch them using this setting.



FULL LIST OF CUSTOM MENU ITEMS

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. AUTOFOCUS | c3. Self-timer | e5. Modeling flash |
| a1. AF-C priority selection | c4. Monitor off delay | e6. Auto bracketing set |
| a2. AF-S priority selection | c5. Remote on duration (ML-L3) | e7. Bracketing order |
| a3. Focus tracking with lock-on | d. SHOOTING/DISPLAY | f. CONTROLS |
| a4. Focus point display | d1. Beep | f1. OK button |
| a5. Focus point illumination | d2. Continuous low-speed | f2. Assign Fn button |
| a6. Focus point wrap-around | d3. Max continuous release | f3. Assign preview button |
| a7. Number of focus points | d4. Exposure-delay mode | f4. Assign AE-L/AF-L button |
| a8. Store points by orientation | d5. Flash warning | f5. Customize command dials |
| a9. Built-in AF-assist illuminator | d6. File number sequence | f6. Release button to use dial |
| b. METERING/EXPOSURE | d7. Viewfinder grid display | f7. Slot empty release lock |
| b1. ISO sensitivity step value | d8. Easy ISO | f8. Reverse indicators |
| b2. EV steps for exposure cntrl | d9. Information display | f9. Assign movie record button |
| b3. Easy exposure compensation | d10. LCD illumination | f10. Assign MB-D16 4 button |
| b4. Matrix metering | d11. MB-D16 battery type | f11. Assign remote (WR) Fn button |
| b5. Centre-weighted area | d12. Battery order | g. MOVIE |
| b6. Fine-tune optimal exposure | e. BRACKETING/FLASH | g1. Assign Fn button |
| c. TIMERS/AE LOCK | e1. Flash sync speed | g2. Assign preview button |
| c1. Shutter-release button AE-L | e2. Flash shutter speed | g3. Assign AE-L/AF-L button |
| c2. Standby timer | e3. Flash cntrl for built-in flash | g4. Assign shutter button |
| | e4. Exposure comp for flash | |

d Shooting/display	
d5 Flash warning	ON
d6 File number sequence	ON
d7 Viewfinder grid display	OFF
d8 Easy ISO	OFF
d9 Information display	AUTO
d10 LCD illumination	OFF
d11 MB-D16 battery type	DLR6
d12 Battery order	MB-D16

e Bracketing/flash	
e1 Flash sync speed	1/200
e2 Flash shutter speed	1/60
e3 Flash cntrl for built-in flash	TTL
e4 Exposure comp. for flash	±2EV
e5 Modeling flash	ON
e6 Auto bracketing set	AE±
e7 Bracketing order	N
f1 OK button	--

d8. Easy ISO

This setting makes use of an otherwise redundant command dial when using program, aperture-priority and shutter-priority modes, and allows you to quickly adjust ISO with one hand, saving valuable time and enabling you to concentrate on your subject. It also maintains the exposure information on the top plate LCD as you do this, which normally disappears when ISO is adjusted using the dedicated control.



e7. Bracketing order

When using bracketing, you may find it helpful to have the images captured and saved in the order of their adjustment, rather than in the default order which is the standard shot followed by underexposed and then overexposed versions. The bracketing order setting allows you to re-order the sequence – it can also be applied to flash and white-balance bracketing in the same way.

Part two - Custom Controls

In the next part of this series, in AP 28 January, we will be returning to Nikon to look at more handy features across the menu system including little-known options such as changing the purpose of a menu tab to display recent settings, and using the comment option to add extra information to your images.

For subjects moving at a moderate pace it can be worth adjusting the burst rate to prevent the memory card from filling up too quickly



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Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them

Dean Lokko, Denbighshire



It was just three years ago that Dean picked up his first DSLR. Living in North Wales, he has access to some stunning landscape locations. He has also travelled to Scotland and his aim in the future is to travel to areas such as Scandinavia and the US to continue his search for incredible locations. Find his work on Flickr and Instagram (@lokkofoto).



2



Snapper

1 Here we find a real sense of scale in this image of the Isle of Skye, Scotland. The inclusion of a fellow photographer shows us the scope of the location.

Canon EOS 6D,
70-200mm, 1/100sec
at f/13, ISO 100,
KODD 3-stop grad
filter

Beam me up

2 This beautiful starscape was found in Denbigh moors, North Wales. Again we see the value of including a human element in the scene. It's a humbling shot.

Canon EOS 6D,
14mm, 20secs at
f/2.8, ISO 8000,
MeFOTO globetrotter
tripod



3





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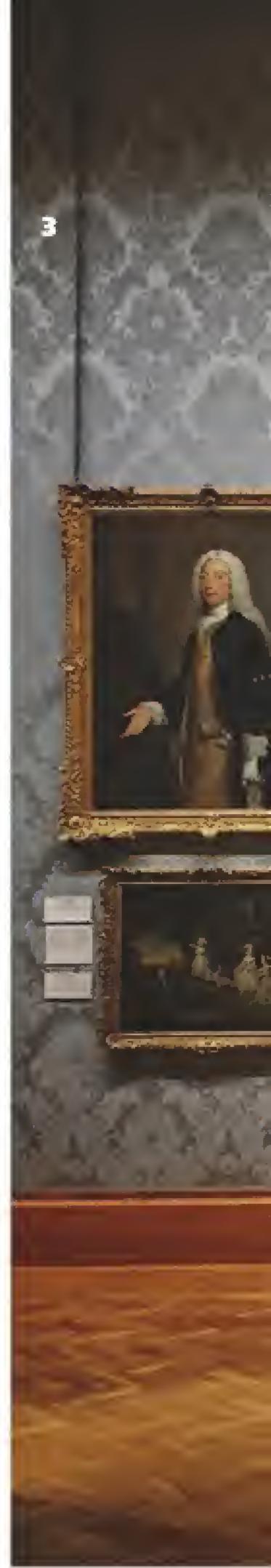
Tree trail
3 A minimal composition is all that's needed here. Once he took the shot, Dean then used Starstax and added a little saturation to the sky. Canon EOS 6D, 70-200mm, 20secs at f/4, ISO 2000, shutter release cable, MEfoto Globetrotter tripod



South Stack
4 A classic view here of South Stack, Holyhead, Anglesey. Lead-in lines are such a simple technique, but it's no wonder we keep using them when they're this effective. Canon EOS 6D, 17-40mm, 20secs at f/8, ISO 400, 10-stop filter, MEfoto Globetrotter tripod

Midsummer knights
5 Here we find Rhuddlan Castle in Wales. Using such a long exposure and a filter has given the water a glassy sheen and reflected the castle. Canon EOS 6D, 10-20mm, 60secs at f/14, ISO 100, Haida 10-stop filter, Manfrotto 190 tripod

Reader Portfolio



Steph Lord, Aylburton



Steph began her journey in photography as an assistant to her brother and father, both of whom are professional

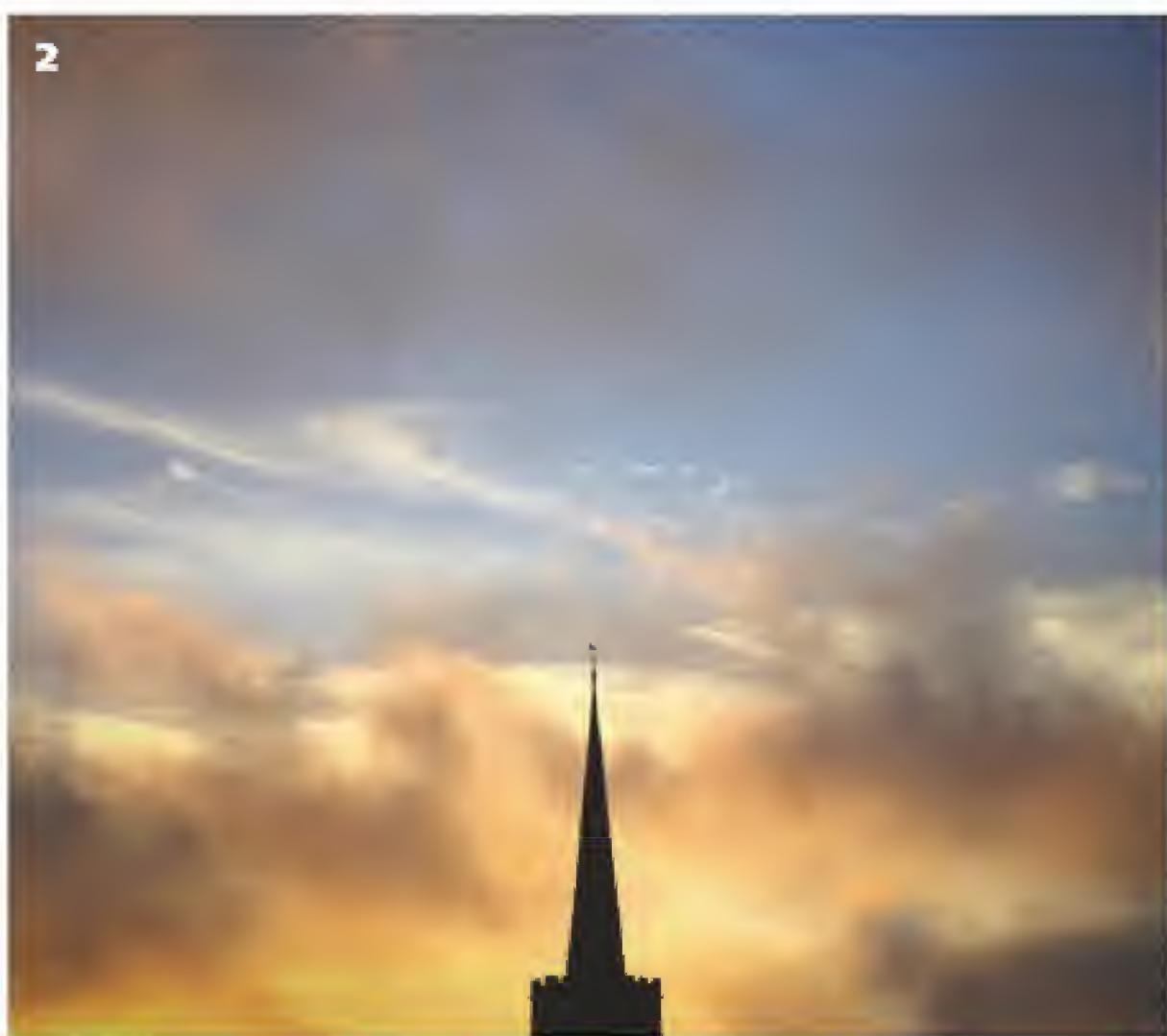
photographers. Her work focuses on the graphic nature of a scene and in the future she plans to produce a series of images about skies.

Horses in the mist

1 Steph had to wait for the horses to shift themselves into the centre of the frame. They sit perfectly beneath the clawing bare branches and thin veil of mist. Taken on an iPhone

Church and sky

2 This is an incredibly dramatic image. The saturated sky that sits above and behind the silhouetted church is a beautiful canvas of colour and sweeping clouds. Taken on an iPhone, Moment tele lens



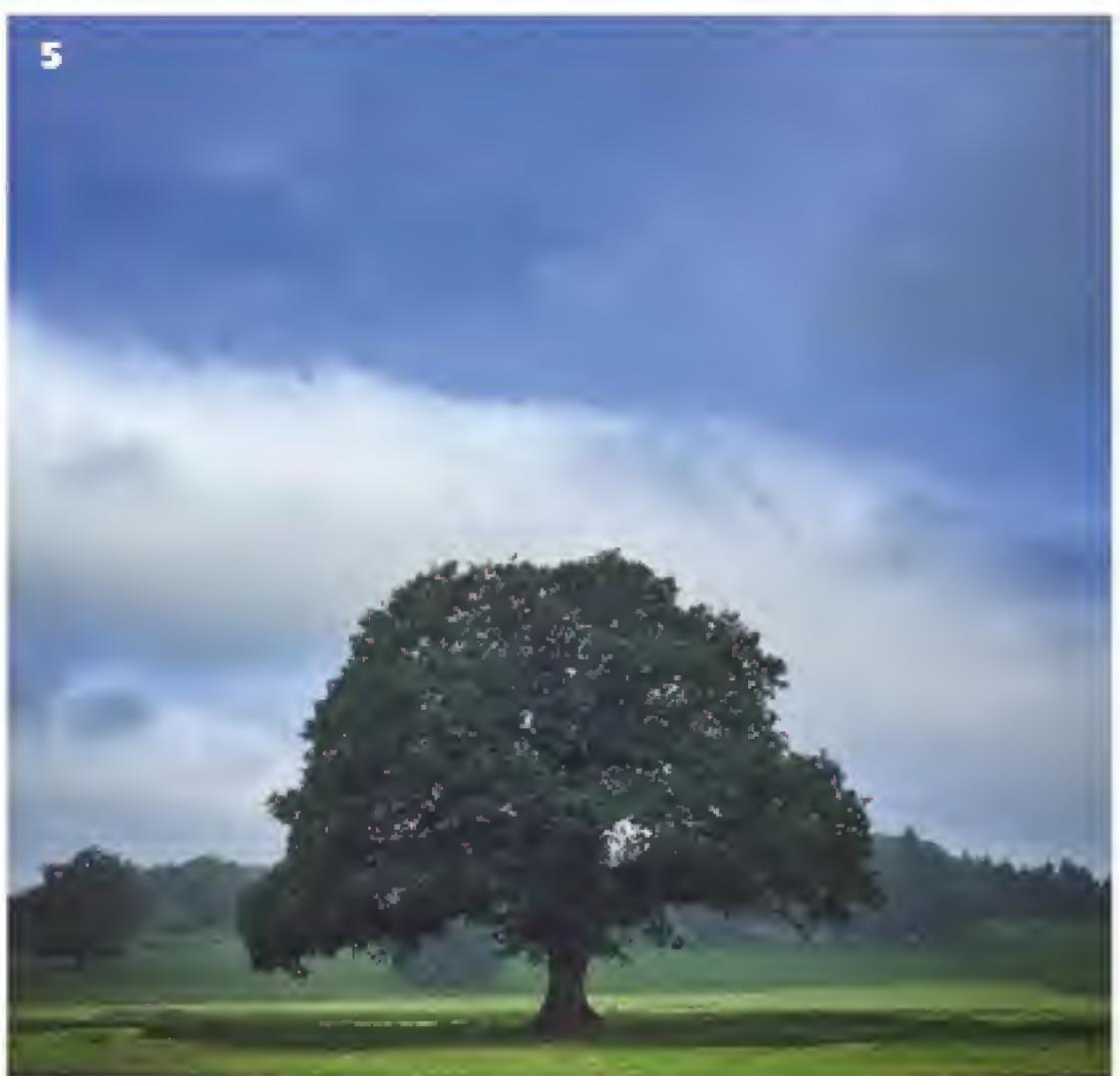
Cardiff Museum
3 The colours and graphic layout of this room in Cardiff Museum were a deeply attractive compositional prospect for an image, so Steph set herself up in a central position and took this image. She then tweaked the image slightly in Snapseed. Taken on an iPhone



Lydney Park Estate
5 Single trees are a popular subject in photography. Using them within a central frame works so well as we can see in this image that also benefits from an atmospheric bank of low clouds. Taken on an iPhone



River Severn
4 The light is so soft here. It complements the reeds and sky perfectly. It's also nice to see the delicate form of the reeds breaking the strong block of the river at the bottom of the frame.
Taken on an iPhone



Evening class

Photoshop guru Martin Evening sorts out your photo-editing and post-processing problems

How to hide distracting colours

THE edits I applied to this image by Andrew Brown were all subtle. This was because there wasn't really much that could be done to better the original raw default settings. It was, however, a good image to demonstrate the use of the HSL panel controls to knock back the green basin

sitting on top of the fence and to make it blend in more with the background. I must also comment on the Sigma 30mm f/1.4 lens that was used to capture this image. The detail was beautifully sharp on the two children and there was a lovely fall-off in focus to the background.

Submit your images

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1 Global tone adjustments

The first step was to go to the Basic panel and adjust the tone settings to set the Exposure and Contrast. With this particular image, I only needed to apply a few gentle tone adjustments to improve upon the original, as the raw file needed little work.



2 HSL colour adjustments

I went to the Lens Corrections panel and applied a profiled lens correction to make a vignette correction. I then went to the HSL panel and adjusted the Hue, Saturation and Luminance sliders so that the green basin in the background appeared more muted.



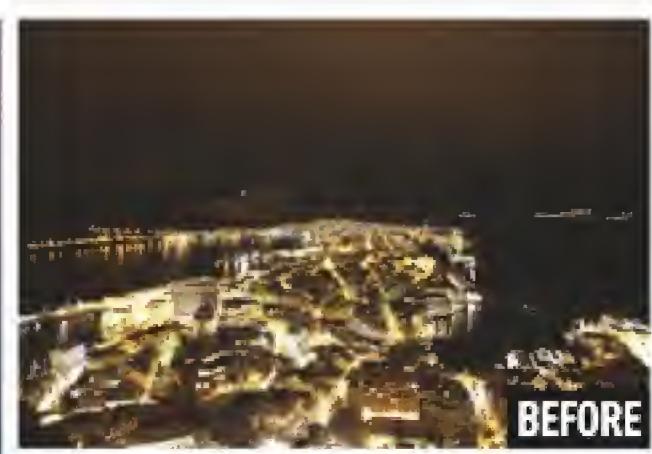
3 Add a Radial Filter adjustment

I wanted the child leaning against the hut wall to stand out more. I was able to do this by adding a Radial Filter adjustment, where I lightened this area using the Exposure and Shadows sliders.

Adding colour contrast

CHRISTIAN Wilkinson's photograph of Ålesund, Norway, was captured from a high vantage point looking down on the town below. The ISO 400, f/11, 30-second exposure tells us this must have been taken using a tripod. Now, considering this was shot using a 28mm lens and how everything would have been in focus at infinity, I don't

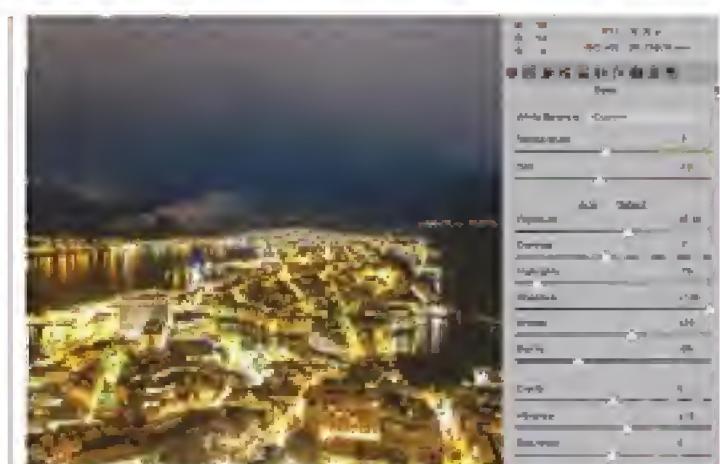
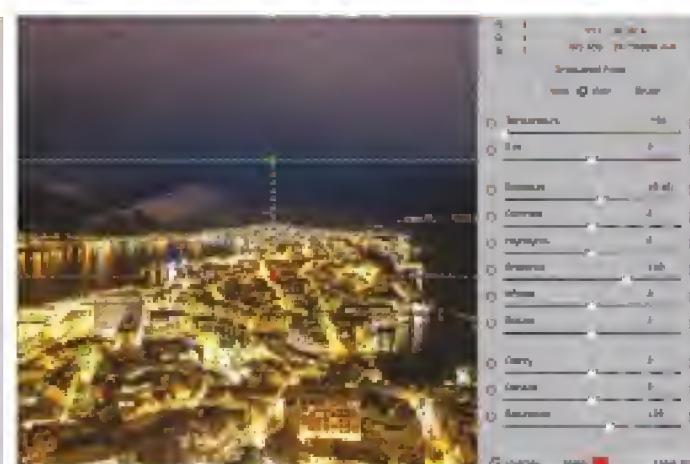
think it was necessary to stop down quite so much. In the before version you can see the buildings were well exposed, but overall the scene was rather contrasty. I therefore used the Camera Raw controls to reduce the contrast, bring out more detail in the sky and introduced some subtle colour contrast between the land and the night sky.



BEFORE



AFTER



1 Basic panel adjustments

To start with, I went to the Basic panel, where I lightened the Exposure, reduced the Highlights and lightened the Shadows. I then fine-tuned the Whites and Blacks sliders. I did this to remove the contrast present in the JPEG original. I also increased the Vibrance slightly.

2 Add a Graduated Filter

In this step, I went to the Tone Curve panel and added extra contrast to the Shadows and Highlights. I then selected the Graduated Filter tool and added a filter effect to the sky, in which I added a cool Temperature adjustment combined with a lightening Exposure and Shadows adjustment.

3 Final colour tweaks

Finally, I went to the Lens Corrections panel and applied a profiled lens correction. Back in the Basic panel, I adjusted the White Balance sliders to adjust the global colour balance. Here, I made the image cooler and more green in colour. The final result shows more detail in the sky area.



Use HSL to adjust hue, saturation and lightness

HSL panel adjustments

THE HSL panel in Camera Raw and Lightroom can be used to apply colour hue, saturation or lightness adjustments. The easiest way to use this panel is to click to select the Target Adjustment Tool from the tools panel in Camera Raw, or the tool icon in the Lightroom HSL panel and click and drag up or down on the image. In the example shown here, with the Lightness panel active, I selected the Target

Adjustment Tool, clicked on the green background and dragged downwards to darken the green colours. I then clicked on top of a foxglove flower and dragged upwards to lighten the purple and magenta colours.



Martin adjusted the green and purple sliders

Martin Evening is a noted expert in both photography and digital imaging. He is well known in London for his fashion and beauty work, for which he has won several awards. Martin has worked with the Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom engineering teams over many years and is one of the founding members of a software design company. Visit www.martinevening.com

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Richard Sibley tests a multi-brand Wi-Fi remote control app

At a glance

- Wi-Fi remote control app for Apple devices
- Cross-brand compatible
- Built-in editing

OVER THE past few years, it has become increasingly common for photographers to use more than one brand of camera. As a result, you can end up with numerous Wi-Fi control apps on your phone. Cascable 2 reduces the number you need by offering a universal app for Canon, Nikon, Olympus and Sony cameras.

Setting up the app is straightforward, with comprehensive instructions included on how to pair your iPhone to your camera. A full list of compatible cameras is available online at cascable.se/help/compatibility.

Once connected, a full range of exposure features is on offer. A live view is presented in the centre of the screen and it is possible to adjust the aperture, shutter speed, exposure compensation, shooting rate, ISO sensitivity and white balance. Usefully, you can also set the focus area using the iPhone's screen.

But this is just the start. A Neutral Density Filter Calculator is built in, while a Sharp Stars tool calculates the longest shutter speed that can be used while avoiding star trails. Focus Peaking is also available and there is a range of add-on features for purchase (see right).

Verdict

On its own, the Cascable 2 app does little more than most proprietary apps, but it does have some useful extra tools. I was able to use the app with Sony RX100 IV and Sony A7R cameras, while technical editor Andy Westlake has used it with an Olympus OM-D E-M5 II. The option to add the Remote Control for interval timer and exposure bracketing, and the ability to manage raw files with the Photo Management feature take the app to the next level. With this in mind, I would try out the free version, but to get the most from the app you will need to buy the full version for £18.99.



CASCABLE ADD-ONS

Remote Control £7.99 **Photo Management £7.99** **Night Mode £7.99** **Full Version £18.99**

While the Cascable app is free to download from the Apple App Store, to make the most of it you will need to add some extra features. Of these, the most useful is the Remote Control package. This adds an intervalometer, exposure bracketing and self-timers to the app, which is perfect for time-lapse

shooting, HDR creation and just making sure that the camera doesn't move when you are taking the shot. Night Mode is simply an inverted colour scheme, with a black rather than white background, so that your phone isn't too bright when using the app at night. However, at £7.99,

it is an expensive addition. Finally, Photo Management allows the user to view raw files and carry out basic editing, as well as export them to compatible iPhone apps, such as Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Mobile. Purchasing the full version for £18.99 adds all three additional modes.

Artisan Obscura Soft Releases

• \$30 • www.artisanobscura.com



If you own a camera that doesn't have a threaded shutter button, Artisan Obscura also produces soft shutter releases with a sticky back option that attach with adhesive

THE purpose of a soft shutter release is simple; it's designed to improve the feel of your camera's shutter button. They effectively raise the height of the shutter button so it sits fractionally higher than the original. It's a small accessory that many photographers swear by to improve the handling of their camera. Artisan Obscura, a small American company based in Englewood, Colorado, has been specialising in the production of handmade soft shutter releases for more than three years. Originally set up by two friends who share a passion for woodwork and photography, the company has built up a wide range of solid wood soft releases and are best known for those that feature a tapered thread to fit cameras that have a screw-in type of shutter button.

On the company's website, you're given the choice of small (11mm) or large (13mm) sizes. The surface area of the large size soft shutter releases are perfect for those with medium to large sized fingers, whereas I'd recommend the small size for those with smaller hands. For our review we were sent two of each size in four different wood finishes – bocote, walnut, teak and bloodwood. As well as the convex type, which as its name suggests offers a raised surface, there's the option to choose the concave type, which I've always found slightly more comfortable. My favourite of the four samples supplied was the large walnut example in the concave shape. Beautifully carved from wood and cleanly finished, it really felt and looked the part on the cameras I tested it with. Although

\$30 (excluding international shipping to the UK) might seem like a lot to pay for what is the smallest accessory you're ever likely to buy for your camera, these beautiful soft shutter releases provide a unique and rustic feel to your camera while improving the handling and shooting experience at the same time. They're a great way of personalising your camera.

Michael Topham



You'll find as many as 30 different soft shutter release designs and finishes on the company's website

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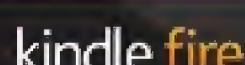
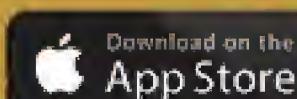


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At a glance

£1,049 body only
£1,149 with 15-45mm lens
£1,399 with 18-150mm lens

- 24.2MP APS-C sensor
- Dual Pixel CMOS AF
- ISO 100-25,600
- 7fps with AF between frames
- 2.36-million-dot EVF
- 3in, 1.62-million-dot tilting touchscreen



Canon EOS M5

It's been a long wait, but finally Canon has launched its first really serious SLR-style mirrorless camera.

Andy Westlake finds out how it stands up in this competitive sector of the market

For and against

- + Superb control layout and handling for such a small camera
- + Excellent image quality in both JPEG and raw
- + Works extremely well with a wide range of EF-mount SLR lenses
- + Easy-to-use wireless communication using Bluetooth and Wi-Fi
- Relatively small and over-contrasty electronic viewfinder
- Shutter is noisier than most mirrorless rivals
- Price is very high

Data file

Sensor	24.2MP APS-C Dual Pixel CMOS
Output size	6000x4000
Focal length mag	1.6x
Lens mount	EF-M
Shutter speeds	30-1/4000sec + bulb
ISO	ISO 100-25,600
Exposure modes	PASM, scene intelligent auto, hybrid auto, creative assist, scene, creative filters
Metering	Evaluative, partial, centreweighted, spot
Exposure comp	±3 EV in 1/3 steps
Continuous shot	9fps [fixed focus], 7fps [with AF]
Video	Full HD (1920x1080), 60fps
Touchscreen	3.2in, 1.62-million-dot tilting
Viewfinder	2.36-million-dot OLED EVF
External mic	Yes, 3.5mm stereo
AF points	49
Memory card	SD, SDHC, SDXC
Power	LP-E17 Li-ion
Battery life	295 shots; 420 in ECO mode
Dimensions	15.6x89.2x60.6mm
Weight	427g inc battery and card

Although Canon launched its first mirrorless camera, the EOS M, back in 2012, the company has never quite seemed to take the idea seriously until now. The original EOS M was over-simplistic and painfully slow at focusing, and while last year's EOS M3 was much improved, it was hamstrung by the lack of an integrated electronic viewfinder. To date, Canon has also only produced a limited range of native EF-M lenses for the system, most of which are slow, variable-aperture zooms. But now, with the EOS M5, it has finally made a camera to turn enthusiast photographers' heads.

In essence, the EOS M5 is a DSLR-like model with a centrally mounted electronic viewfinder and tilting rear touchscreen: a design blueprint that has proved popular with enthusiasts ever since the

appearance of the original Olympus OM-D E-M5. Yet Canon has managed to cover the M5's petite body with a well-thought-out array of buttons and dials that make it one of the nicest-to-use small CSCs we've yet seen. The addition of Dual Pixel CMOS AF and the latest DIGIC 7 processor makes it genuinely quick, too.

However, Canon hasn't exactly done the EOS M5 any favours with regards to pricing. It costs around £1,049 body only, £1,149 with the compact EF-M 15-45mm f/3.5-6.3 IS STM zoom, or £1,399 with the new EF-M 18-150mm f/3.5-6.3 IS STM. All these will come with an adapter for Canon's EF and EF-S DSLR lenses in the box, and depending on how charitably you look at it, this is either an admission of the paucity of the EF-M lens range, or a clever move to increase the camera's



The EOS M5 generally delivers attractive JPEGs straight out of the camera. Canon EF-M 18-150mm f/3.5-6.3 at 122mm, 1/200sec at f/8, ISO 100



appeal to existing EOS users.

However, the problem facing the EOS M5 is that for the same or less money you can buy some very attractive cameras that match or beat it for features. For example, Fujifilm's lovely little X-T10 has a similar feature set for less than half the price, while Panasonic's bang up-to-date Lumix DMC-G80 brings a larger viewfinder, fully articulated screen, in-body image stabilisation, 4K video recording and weather-sealed construction for two thirds of the cost of the EOS M5. Then there's Sony's Alpha 6300, which has a sophisticated AF system and 11 frames per second shooting, still at a lower price. Now, as we'll see, the EOS M5 has some tricks of its own up its sleeve, but will these be enough to tempt Canon DSLR shooters to dip their toes into mirrorless waters?

Features

At the EOS M5's heart is a 24.2-million-pixel sensor with Canon's Dual Pixel CMOS AF. It's closely related to that found in the EOS 80D, but updated for the M5, with gapless micro lenses for improved sensitivity. Its Dual Pixel design splits each of the light-sensitive pixels into two photodiodes, right and left, and this enables phase detection for autofocus, similar to the systems found in DSLRs. Crucially, though, the M5 also sports Canon's latest DIGIC 7 processor, which is said to be 14 times more powerful than the previous version. Putting this power behind the Dual Pixel sensor means the EOS M5 has a very capable AF system indeed.

Together, the sensor and processor enable a sensitivity range of ISO 100-25,600 with 14-bit raw output. The EOS M5

can shoot at seven frames per second with AF between shots, or nine frames per second with focus fixed, with a buffer of 26 frames in JPEG, or 16 in raw. Surprisingly, though, the 7fps mode doesn't offer live view between frames, displaying previously taken frames instead. This hampers following moving subjects, and feels years out of date.

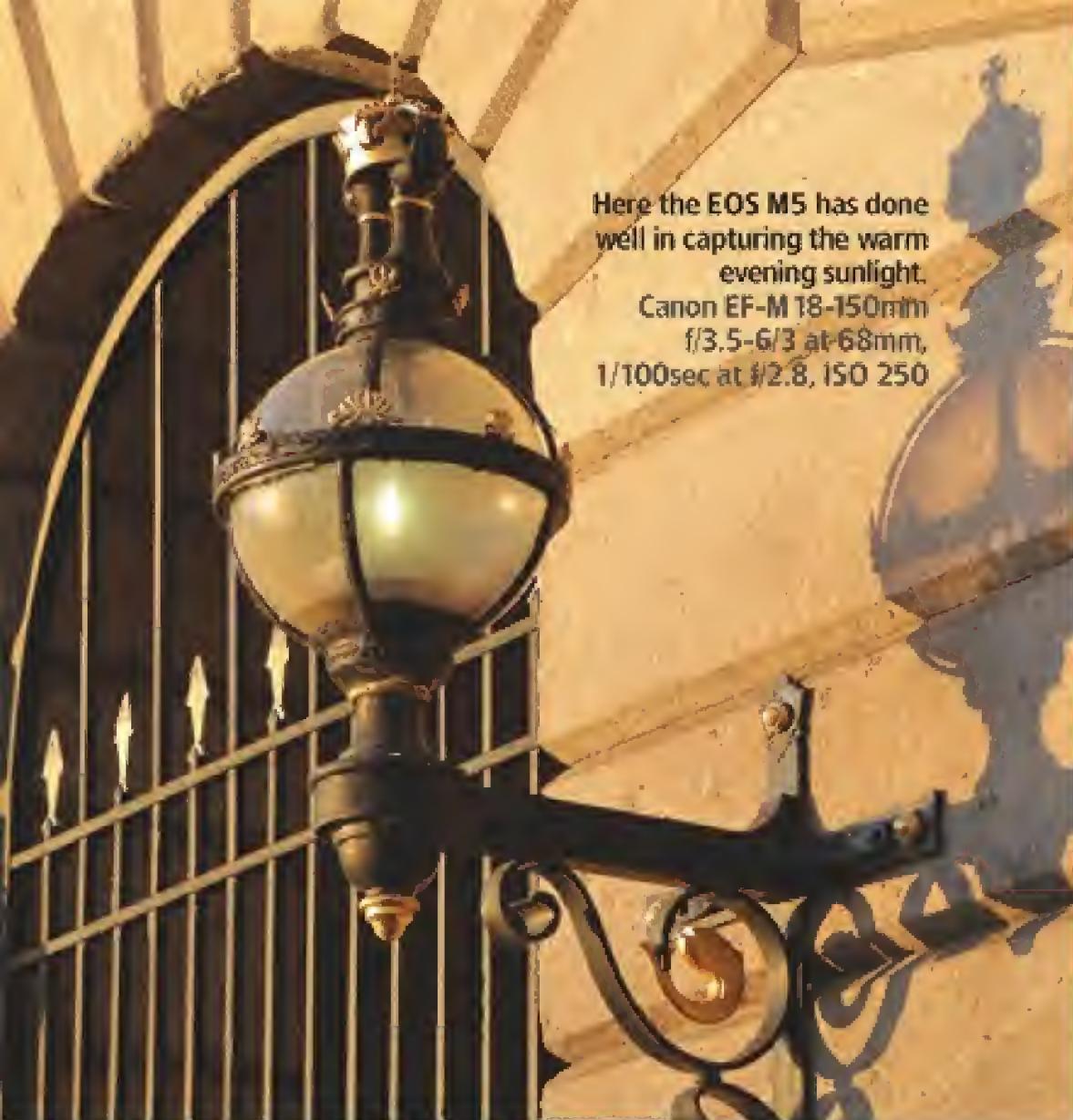
Shutter speeds range from 30secs-1/4000sec plus bulb, and as usual Canon uses an electronic first curtain shutter that eliminates any vibrations before the exposure is made. Unusually, though, the M5 has no fully electronic silent shutter option, which is now a standard feature on most similar models. The mechanical shutter is comparatively noisy, too, making a distinctly audible clack, so unlike many other recent mirrorless models, it's not ideal for shooting

in quiet environments.

When it comes to additional photographic features, however, the EOS M5 is relatively sparse. It has an array of subject-based scene modes and creative filters for image-processing effects, but if you're looking for such things as automatically stitched panoramas, focus bracketing or high dynamic range shooting, it's not the best choice. Canon does at least provide a nicely designed in-camera raw converter.

Viewfinder and screen

For eye-level viewing, the M5 uses a 2.36-million-dot OLED EVF that is similar to that used in the PowerShot G5 X. With a 120fps live-view feed and a magnification of around 0.62x, it's considerably smaller than those in similarly priced competitors, and indeed comparable in size to



Here the EOS M5 has done well in capturing the warm evening sunlight.
Canon EF-M 18-150mm f/3.5-6.3 at 68mm,
1/100sec at f/2.8, ISO 250

the EVFs used in cheaper cameras such as the Fujifilm X-T10 and Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark II. This is exacerbated by the overly saturated and contrasty display, which exaggerates colours and makes shadow areas difficult to see in bright light (and there's no facility to adjust the EVF's colour or contrast, just its brightness). However, the viewfinder provides a reasonably useful indication of whether highlights will clip, and gives a much more accurate depiction of depth of field compared to the optical viewfinders of DSLRs.

The EVF is complemented by a

3.2in 1.62-million-dot LCD that tilts upwards for use as a waist-level finder, or downwards for overhead shots. It can even be set to face fully forwards beneath the camera for selfies, rather like the Olympus Pen E-PL7 and E-PL8. It's bright, sharp and clear and its 3:2 aspect ratio matches the sensor perfectly. An eye sensor allows the camera to switch from the LCD to EVF automatically, or alternatively you can set a custom button to do this manually. But the difference between the two displays is huge; shots that appear rich and colourful in the EVF often look much lighter and washed out

on the LCD. The reality, when viewing image files later on a calibrated monitor, lies somewhere between the two.

Both the viewfinder and screen can display useful additional information during shooting, including a well-designed dual-axis electronic level and a live histogram that can show red, green and blue channels separately, which is a handy trick that is unique to Canon. You can configure up to three display modes with different amounts of information, and cycle through them using the Info button. If you prefer using the EVF, the LCD can be set to show a detailed status screen/quick control panel.

Build and handling

The Canon EOS M5's body is primarily polycarbonate rather than aluminium or magnesium alloy, but it still manages to feel sturdy in your hand, aided by a nicely shaped, if somewhat small rubber-coated grip. Indeed, it handles remarkably well for a small camera that measures just 115.6x89.2x60.6mm and weighs 427g, although those with larger hands may find it all a bit cramped. The impression of quality is maintained by the attractive gunmetal top-plate and beautifully knurled metal dials. These manage to combine being well placed and easy to use, but difficult to knock accidentally, which sadly can't be said of all

cameras. Unfortunately, Canon doesn't claim any level of weatherproofing, which is disappointing at this price point.

While the design and control layout are an evolution of the EOS M3's, with an exposure-compensation dial and main electronic dial around the shutter release, Canon has added an additional thumb dial on the top plate. This has a Dial Func button in its centre, and pressing this cycles through various functions including ISO, white balance and (in manual-exposure mode) aperture setting. You can choose to add further settings to the list, such as metering, drive and focus modes, and configure the dial separately for movie shooting. This all turns out to be an excellent way of putting lots of control at your fingertips, allowing you to change key exposure settings without having to take your eye from the viewfinder.

The D-pad on the camera's back provides direct access to ISO, flash mode and manual focus, and is surrounded by a somewhat fiddly fourth control dial that is mainly used to change secondary settings and to browse images in playback mode. Sadly, the D-pad can't be set to move the autofocus point around the frame directly, as on other similar cameras; instead, you have to press the AF area button on the camera's shoulder first, which can be difficult to

Bluetooth and Wi-Fi connectivity

FOR the first time on a Canon camera, the EOS M5 adds low-energy Bluetooth 4.1 connectivity alongside Wi-Fi and Dynamic NFC. The idea is to maintain a permanent Bluetooth connection with your smartphone, which brings a number of benefits. Using the free Canon Camera Connect app for Android and iOS, you can use your phone as a simple remote release without having to waste time setting up a Wi-Fi connection, and with minimal impact on the battery life of either device. This is a great idea, and I found it really handy on several occasions.

The Bluetooth connection can also seamlessly activate the camera's Wi-Fi from your phone for higher bandwidth tasks: copying images across for sharing, or controlling the camera remotely with a live view feed. You can browse your pictures on your phone and pull across your favourites,



Canon offers a choice of remote control methods, either a simple Bluetooth release or full control over Wi-Fi with a live view display (above)

but more unusually, you can also view them on the camera and push them to your phone.

As usual with Canon, the Wi-Fi can also do rather more than just connect to a mobile device. You can print directly to a Wi-Fi-enabled printer, or connect wirelessly to a smart TV to view your images. The camera remembers a list of your devices that is displayed by pressing the dedicated Wi-Fi

button on the side of the grip, making it particularly easy to switch between connecting to your tablet, phone, TV or printer. In practice, this all works really well; I used the M5 with my Apple iPhone SE, Samsung Galaxy tablet and Epson XP-950 printer, and everything worked flawlessly. Overall, it makes for a really straightforward, yet powerful wireless system that I consider to be the best I've yet used.



Canon's 24MP Dual Pixel CMOS sensor delivers good results at high ISOs.
Canon EF-M 18-150mm f/3.5-6.3 at 118mm, 1/200sec at f/8, ISO 1600

locate by touch and easily mixed up with the auto-exposure-lock button. The focus point can be placed almost anywhere around the frame and two sizes of AF area are available, the smaller of which is handy with finely detailed subjects. However, other brands such as Panasonic and Fujifilm offer considerably more flexibility in this respect.

A button on the front plate toggles the touchscreen AF area-selection function on and off by default, while on the top-plate there's a configurable M-Fn button. Indeed, practically all of the buttons can be reassigned to functions of your choosing, so most users should be able to set the camera up to suit them. Add in the comprehensive on-screen control panel and customisable Q menu, plus two user-configurable Custom modes accessed from the main mode dial, and you should rarely have to dip into the menus.

The rear screen is touch sensitive, and thanks to Canon's excellent interface it complements the physical controls very well. Not only can it be used to change almost any setting, but it's also available for selecting the AF point, even when using the electronic viewfinder. We've seen this on plenty of cameras before, but the EOS M5's implementation allows you to choose the area of the screen you wish to use. You can use either the whole screen, left or right halves, or any of the four quarters. If you set the Position Method to Relative, the camera won't reset the focus point if your nose contacts the touchscreen while shooting, either. Together, these options make the EOS M5's touchpad AF point selection more

usable than many of its rivals, although it's still no substitute for a dedicated control.

Autofocus

Previous Canon EOS M-series cameras have been noticeably sluggish when it comes to autofocus, but with its Dual Pixel AF and snappy processor, the EOS M5 is an entirely different matter. With native EF-M lenses it's very comparable to other recent mirrorless models, acquiring accurate focus on static subjects in the blink of an eye. Because the AF system uses the main image sensor rather than a separate light path as in DSLRs, AF is also exceptionally accurate, with no tendency to front or back focus, so long as you pick a focus target with suitably high contrast.

More impressively, the EOS M5 also works very well with legacy EF-mount DSLR lenses on the Canon EF-EOS M-mount adapter. We tested it with everything from a modern Sigma 50mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art lens back to the original micromotor-driven EF 50mm f/1.8, including a Micro USM-powered EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6 IS USM, and even an old Sigma 28-70mm f/2.8 EX DG. All autofocus quickly and decisively, much as they would on a DSLR, and I'd have no hesitation using EF lenses for everyday shooting. Indeed, the only point where the EOS M5 struggled was when trying to autofocus with slow EF lenses in low light. Compared to Canon's previous mirrorless models, it's a huge step forward.

Manual focus hasn't been neglected, with a focus-peaking display available in a choice of three colours and two

Focal points

Canon has hidden some serious technology inside the EOS M5's compact, SLR-like body

Battery

The EOS M5 promises 295 shots per charge from its LP-E17 battery, or 420 in its power-saving ECO mode.

Remote control

Traditionalists will be pleased to find that the EOS M5 can use both infrared and E3-type wired remote releases, as well as being controllable from a smartphone using either Bluetooth or Wi-Fi.

Connect button

A small button on the side of the handgrip below the HDMI port initiates a wireless connection to your smartphone, tablet or printer.

Pop-up flash

There's a small pop-up flash unit in the viewfinder housing, as well as a hotshoe for attaching EX-series flashguns.



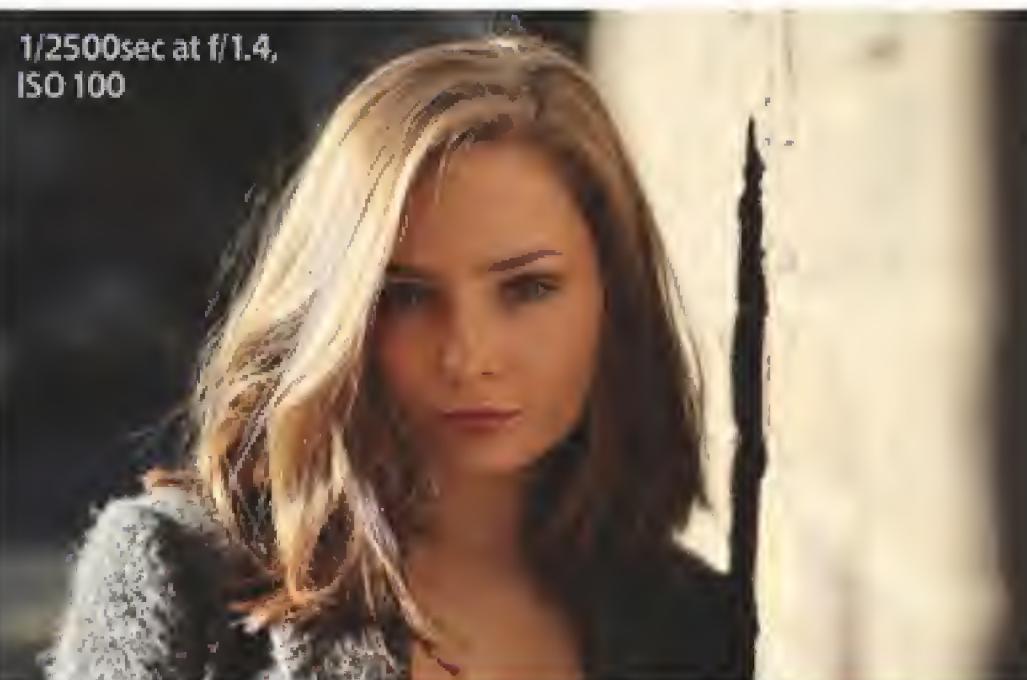
Connectors

A 3.5mm microphone socket is included alongside Micro USB and remote-release sockets.

Tilting screen

The touch-sensitive LCD tilts upwards by 85° and downwards by 180° to face forwards underneath the camera's body for selfies.





This was shot using the Sigma 50mm f/1.4 on the Canon EF-EOS M adapter

Sensitivity sensitivity levels. It can either be set to display whenever you're using manual focus, or toggled on and off using a function button. A magnified view is also available by pressing the AF area button and spinning the front dial, but unusually it can't be made to engage automatically whenever you turn the focus ring.

Performance

In practical use, the EOS M5 generally delivers very decent results. It's snappy in all aspects of its operation, powering up quickly and responding to controls promptly with no lag. It's the kind of camera that gets out of your way and never feels like it's holding up your shooting.

Canon's evaluative metering is on the whole very reliable, but it's quite strongly linked to the AF area so tends to overexpose when focusing on a dark part of the scene. However, you can see this in the viewfinder and apply exposure compensation accordingly, aided by the live histogram. Auto white balance is likewise very well judged, and Canon's JPEG output gives attractive colours that are saturated but not overblown, and with particularly fine skin tones.

The default standard picture style uses somewhat unsubtle noise reduction and sharpening algorithms, but switching to the fine detail style delivers much better resolution with the same colour rendition. At higher sensitivities of ISO 3200 and above, the processing prioritises colour retention over detail, so files look distinctly mushy when examined at the pixel level. Other brands do rather better in this respect, most notably Fujifilm. As is often the case, you're likely to get better results at high ISOs by carefully processing raw files.

Video

Video recording is available in full HD resolution at up to 60fps, with a built-in 3.5mm stereo socket for adding an external microphone (but no headphone socket). However, there's no 4K video option, which this year we've seen as standard from companies such as Sony and Panasonic. You do at least get full manual control over exposure in video mode. You can also record time-lapse movies.

There's 5-axis image electronic stabilisation on board for video recording, meaning footage is stabilised even when using non-IS lenses, and the electronic stabilisation can be combined with optical stabilisation when using compatible lenses. It does a decent job of reducing camera shake and smoothing out panning movements, but it's nowhere near as effective as the mechanical systems found in rival cameras from Olympus and Panasonic.

It's also possible to pull focus from one subject to another during recording simply by tapping the touchscreen. Here, the Dual Pixel AF really comes into its own, producing smooth, controlled focus transitions with no hunting or overshoot. You'll need to use an STM lens for this, though; lenses with other focus motors are liable to give visible juddering.

Video quality is much as we'd expect from a camera that only records full HD; it's OK, but not great. Exposure, white balance and colour are all very creditable, but fine detail is lacking and sharpening artefacts very visible. It will probably be acceptable for stills photographers who are just dabbling in video, but if you're serious about getting high-quality footage then you'd be much better off buying a 4K-capable camera instead.

Lab results

Andrew Sydenham's lab tests reveal just how the camera performs

Canon has equipped the EOS M5 with its latest 24-million-pixel Dual-Pixel CMOS sensor, and as a result it delivers some of the best image quality we've seen from any of the firm's APS-C cameras. Resolution is high, due to an optical low-pass filter that appears to be relatively weak, and low-ISO dynamic range is very impressive. Indeed, few APS-C models from any brand produce obviously better image quality, aside from at very high ISO settings. With no raw-file support from Adobe at the time of writing, we've assessed the raw performance using Canon's own Digital Photo Professional software.

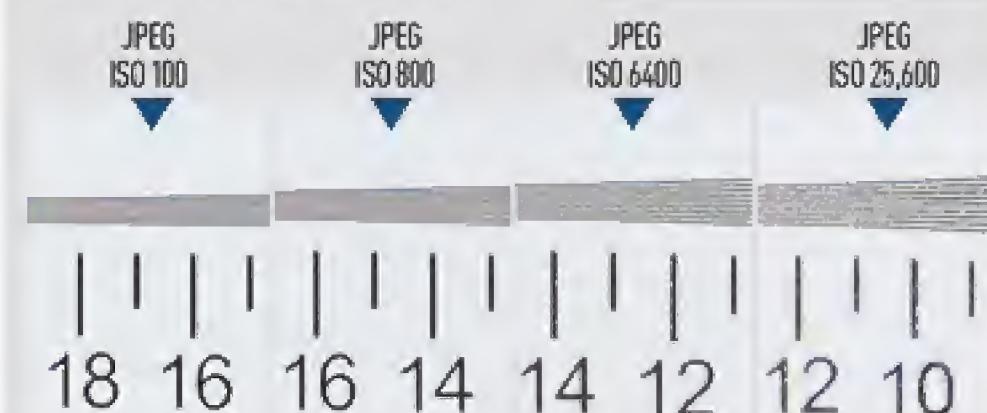
Dynamic range



With Canon's latest APS-C sensor on board, the EOS M5 delivers an impressive set of results in our Applied Imaging tests. Results close to 13EV at low ISOs indicate that there should be significant scope to recover lots of shadow detail when processing raw files. Naturally, the dynamic range drops as the ISO is raised, but it stays quite respectable up to ISO 3200 at least. However, as we often tend to see, very low figures at the highest two ISO settings indicate their marginal usability, with significant noise and minimal detail likely to be visible in darker tones of the image.

Resolution

Below we show details from our resolution chart test pattern (right). Multiply the number beneath the lines by 200 to give the resolution in lines per picture height.



The EOS M5 performs strongly in our resolution chart tests, with numbers very similar to the EOS 80D and better than we recorded for the EOS M3 (suggesting a rather weak optical low-pass filter). Looking at standard JPEGs, we see a resolution of around 3,400 lines per picture height at ISO 100, which is very respectable for a 24-million-pixel sensor. Naturally, resolution falls as the ISO is raised and noise impacts the image, to around 2,800l/ph at ISO 1600, 2,600l/ph at ISO 6400 and just 2,100l/ph at ISO 25,600.

Our cameras and lenses are tested using the industry-standard Image Engineering IQ-Analyser software. Visit www.image-engineering.de for more details

Noise

Both raw and JPEG images taken from our diorama scene are captured at the full range of ISO settings. The camera is placed in its default setting for JPEG images. Raw images are sharpened and noise reduction applied, to strike the best balance between resolution and noise.

JPEG ISO 100



JPEG ISO 400



JPEG ISO 1,600



JPEG ISO 6,400



JPEG ISO 12,800



JPEG ISO 25,600



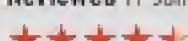
At low ISO sensitivities, the EOS M5 gives very clean images, with barely any visible noise. However, in the standard picture style, unsophisticated sharpening results in a rather mushy rendition of the finest details, and to get the most from the camera you'll need either to switch to the fine detail style, or adjust the sharpening fineness setting. Image quality remains excellent up to ISO 800, but beyond this, noise starts to have a more visible impact on the files. ISO 1600 and ISO 3200 are still just fine at smaller output sizes, but by ISO 6400 almost all fine detail has been lost, and the shadows appear mushy. At the two highest settings of ISO 12,800 and ISO 25,600, noise overwhelms the image, so these are best left alone unless there's no other option.

The competition



Fujifilm
X-T10

Price £449 (body only)
Sensor 16.3MP APS-C CMOS
ISO 100-51,200 (extended)
Continuous shooting 8fps
Reviewed 11 June 2015



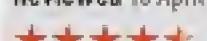
Panasonic Lumix
DMC-G80

Price £699 (body only)
Sensor 16MP Four Thirds MOS
ISO 100-51,600 (extended)
Continuous shooting 9fps
Reviewed 12 November 2016



Sony
Alpha 6300

Price £899 (body only)
Sensor 24.2MP APS-C CMOS
ISO 100-51,200 (extended)
Continuous shooting 11fps
Reviewed 16 April 2016



Read the full tests of these cameras at www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/reviews

Verdict

WITH the EOS M5, Canon has finally made the kind of mirrorless model that its users have been asking for. With its built-in electronic viewfinder and plentiful set of controls, it should appeal strongly to enthusiasts, while its Dual Pixel autofocus works remarkably well even with old EF-mount SLR lenses. This means it certainly has a lot of potential for persuading Canon's dyed-in-the-wool DSLR users to try out mirrorless technology for the first time, especially with the EF lens adapter included in the box.

The camera handles well, too, with all those buttons and dials making it easy to change settings, although those with larger hands might find it a bit cramped. One aspect where it falls short, however, is focus area selection; it's inexcusable for a body costing over £1,000 not to have a dedicated control for this function. However, image quality is very good indeed, and the camera gives you all the information you need to override its automated systems when needed.

But while there's a great deal to like about the EOS M5, in some ways it does feel rather behind the times. The relatively noisy shutter and lack of a silent electronic option makes it less discreet than we've come to expect from recent mirrorless models, and the inability to show a live-view feed during continuous shooting is also a few years out of date. And while the relatively small viewfinder, tilt-only screen and non-weathersealed



construction would be forgivable if the camera's cost was closer to the similarly specified Fujifilm X-T10 or Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark II, the fact is that cameras like the Panasonic G80 and Sony Alpha 6300 simply give you much more for your money.

Indeed, the huge problem for the EOS M5 is its price, and this makes it difficult to rate. I suspect Canon would argue that you're paying for a sophisticated sensor and processor, and to be honest I think we're going to have to get used to all new cameras looking much more expensive in the immediate future. But right now, £1,049 body-only is simply too much to pay in this competitive sector. However, if the price were to drop closer to £800 in the future, then the EOS M5 would be a much more serious contender.

**Amateur
Photographer
Testbench
Recommended**



FEATURES	7/10
BUILD & HANDLING	8/10
METERING	9/10
AUTOFOCUS	8/10
AWB & COLOUR	9/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	8/10
IMAGE QUALITY	8/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	8/10

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Lee Filters intends to make an SW150 adapter for the lens, which we're told will arrive in early 2017

Sigma 12-24mm f/4 DG HSM Art

Michael Topham puts **Sigma's** latest wideangle zoom to the test and finds out if it lives up to the promise of producing zero distortion

Last year, we saw a surge of new wideangle lenses hit the market. One that made a lasting impression, with its phenomenal image quality, was the Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM. During the official announcement of the new Sigma 12-24mm f/4 DG HSM Art at Photokina 2016, Mr Kazuto Yamaki, Sigma's CEO, applauded Canon and its engineers for creating one of the finest wideangle lenses ever made, before going on to explain how it has challenged other lens manufacturers to produce an optic that's as good as this, if not

better. In typical fashion, Sigma's latest ultra-wideangle zoom undercuts its counterpart by quite a margin in terms of price. To give you some idea, a saving of over £1,000 can be made if you were to choose this lens ahead of the Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM, but it remains £720 more expensive than the Tamron 15-30mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD (£929).

Features

Those familiar with the history of Sigma lenses will tell you that this isn't the company's first attempt at creating an ultra-wideangle zoom. It

is, in fact, the third lens Sigma has produced covering this focal length, and it follows on from the Sigma 12-24mm f/4.5-5.6 EX DG that was announced in 2003, and the Sigma 12-24mm f/4.5-5.6 DG II HSM released eight years later. This third-generation lens has the promise of being Sigma's best ultra-wideangle to date, with an entirely new optical design that incorporates 16 elements in 11 groups.

The lens leverages Sigma's expertise in the processing and manufacture of aspherical lenses and incorporates three aspherical elements produced with precision glass moulding. The most impressive aspherical element is found at the front, and with a diameter of 80mm it's the largest such element in this class of lens. It also features elements made from 'F' low-dispersion (FLD) glass, which, combined with the



The vignetting the lens produces at f/4 (taken at 12mm) is clear to see in this image of a station underpass

aspherical lenses, are designed to minimise distortion, chromatic aberration, coma and flare. To prevent flare and ghosting presenting problems when users shoot towards the light, Sigma has employed its Super Multi-Layer Coatings and has equipped it with a permanent petal-shaped lens hood at the front.

The lens features a nine-blade rounded diaphragm to ensure it provides an attractive rendition to out-of-focus backgrounds with pleasing circular bokeh in the highlights. The maximum aperture of f/4 holds right through the zoom range and the lens can be closed down to a minimum of f/22. As we've got used to seeing on most Sigma lenses, the new lens employs the manufacturer's Hyper Sonic Motor (HSM). As well as driving the autofocus system smoothly and quietly, it presents full-time manual focusing. This allows users to adjust the focus manually at any time without a need to flick the AF/MF switch to manual first.

The minimum focusing distance of the lens is easy to remember and allows users to focus within 24cm of a subject at the 24mm end of the zoom range, giving a magnification ratio of 1:4.9. The lens is compatible with Sigma's USB docking device, which can be used to update firmware and refine the focus settings using the manufacturer's Optimization Pro software.

The sheer mass of the lens implies that it's going to be best paired with full-frame DSLRs that feature the largest and most comfortable handgrips. However, there's nothing to say it can't be used with an APS-C DSLR, with which it's also compatible. Attach it to an APS-C DSLR with a 1.5x crop factor and it's equivalent to an 18-36mm lens, whereas on Canon APS-C DSLRs it has an equivalent focal length

of 19-38mm. As with all lenses released by Sigma in recent times, the 12-24mm f/4 DG HSM Art is available in three mounts and caters for Canon, Nikon and Sigma users.

Build and handling

Slip off the lens cap that's a good tight fit and you're greeted by a monstrous aspherical glass element on this new lens. Its bulbous shape isn't too dissimilar to Canon's EF 11-24mm f/4L USM lens. The petal-shaped hood shields the front element from lens flare and doubles up as a way of protecting the expensive element from any scuffs that could be caused by knocking into something when the lens cap isn't attached.

There's no getting away from the fact that what we're looking at is a fairly big and heavy lens, although it's actually stubbier in length

than the Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM, Tamron 15-30mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD and Nikon 14-24mm f/2.8 G AF-S ED. The first time you pick it up, you quickly realise just how heavy it is. Weighing 1,150g, it lets you know when you've packed it as part of your kit, and it works out at 50g heavier than the mighty Tamron 15-30mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD.

From the rear of the lens looking forward, you'll notice how the barrel tapers out slightly before you reach the zoom ring. Although it's not the largest zoom ring we've come across in terms of how far it extends down the barrel, it's easily located from behind the camera. It's consistently smooth across the focal range, but does require a bit more force to shift the heavy internal optics than you might be used to. Best of all, you can get from 12mm to 24mm and vice versa very quickly with less than a quarter

The lens controls curvilinear distortion extremely well from 18-24mm, but barrel distortion is evident when it's used at wider focal lengths



RIDE A
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THE ALL-STEEL BICYCLE

'The smoothness of the focus ring is truly excellent'

turn. Beyond the zoom ring you'll notice that the lens is embellished with the letter A in a silver circle, indicating that it's part of Sigma's Art series. To one side of this you have the AF/MF switch that juts out slightly from the side of the barrel and on top is the focus-distance window that displays its information in feet and metres. The AF/MF switch offers a satisfying click, and the white background that's revealed behind the switch when it's set to AF acts as a visual reference of where it's set to in low light.

Just ahead of the focus-distance window there's a steep step up to the focus ring, which is considerably larger in diameter than the zoom ring. This differentiates the feel of the zoom ring and focus ring from behind the camera and means you're never in doubt of what you're adjusting. The smoothness of the focus ring is truly excellent and can't be faulted.

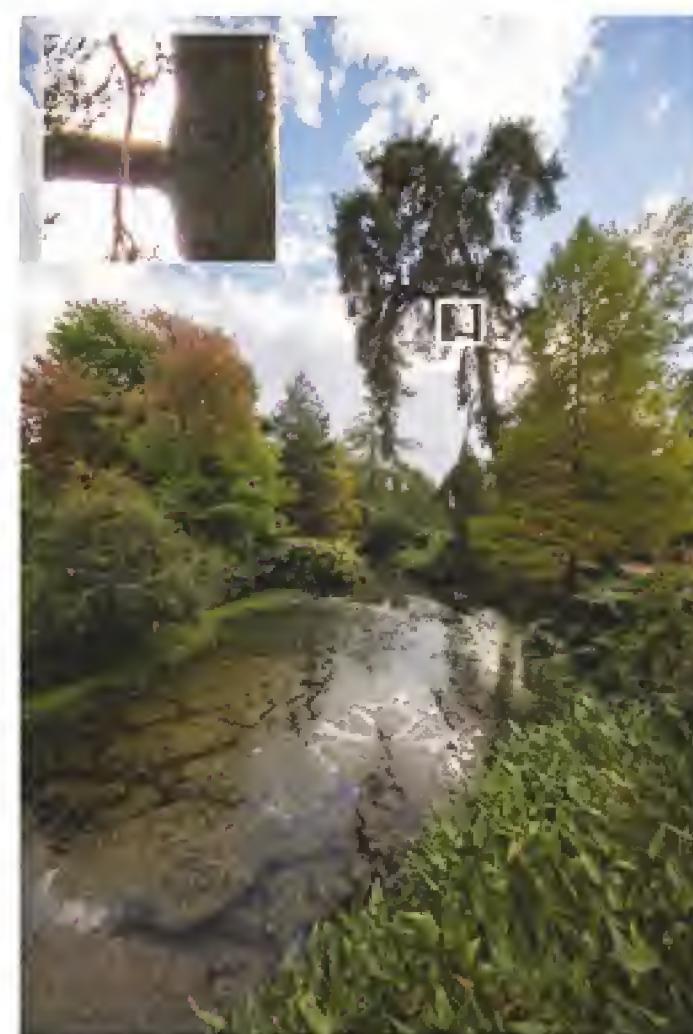
Image quality

As our review sample was in Canon-fit, it seemed appropriate to pair it up with one of Canon's 50-million-pixel DSLRs – the EOS 5DS R. Eager to find out how well the lens performs with regard to controlling curvilinear distortion, I headed out to take some real-world sample images throughout the focal range before examining these alongside the images of our distortion chart taken in the lab.

Creating such an ultra-wideangle lens with zero distortion was always going to be a big ask, and although there's virtually no distortion between 18mm and 24mm, you can still expect to see barrel distortion in shots taken at the widest end of the zoom. That said, the level of barrel distortion at 12mm isn't as severe as you might expect and shouldn't be difficult to correct using an Adobe lens profile as soon as one becomes available for Lightroom CC, Photoshop CC and Camera Raw.

Analysing our Applied Imaging tests at each aperture setting revealed that the lens resolves exceptional sharpness. Our results tell us the lens is at its sharpest in the centre at the widest end of the focal length, with corner sharpness at 12mm peaking at f/8. Zooming in to 18mm also sees the corner sharpness peak at f/8, with the centre sharpness at this focal length measuring slightly below the figure recorded at 12mm at f/4. Inspecting our results at the long end of the zoom tells us the centre sharpness isn't quite as impressive as it is at the wide end when it's used wide open (f/4), but sharpness does improve by closing the lens down to f/5.6.

Examining the edges, where aberrations can often be discovered, revealed that this lens does an admirable job of keeping fringing in check. It was only in the very brightest areas of a few of my test shots, where branches were backlit by the sun, that I noticed purple fringes of colour. Vignetting is apparent in images shot at the widest end of the zoom at f/4, but can't be traced at f/5.6 and beyond. The same can be said of the long end of the zoom where corners appear approximately 1.2EV darker than the centre at f/4.



Purple fringes of colour were traced in a few shots

Our verdict

THIS lens has created a bit of a buzz among landscape, architectural and interior photographers, and all for good reason. Yes, it's heavy and may not hold the title of being the world's widest rectilinear zoom lens like the Canon EF 11-24mm f/4 L USM, but it does have many of the features of its closest rival, for a lot less money.

There are faster wideangle zooms should you demand a faster maximum aperture, but if you'd like the option of squeezing more in the frame than the Nikon 14-24mm f/2.8 G AF-S ED or Tamron 15-30mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD allow you to do, this Sigma lens takes some beating. DSLR users who've been calling out for an affordable full-frame wideangle zoom that's capable of delivering exceptional results on the highest resolution cameras have finally got what they've been asking for. It's yet another superb addition to Sigma's Art line-up.



Data file

Price £1,649
Filter diameter N/A
Lens elements 16
Groups 11
Diaphragm blades 9
Aperture f/4-f/22
Minimum focus 0.24m
Dimensions 102x131.5mm
Weight 1.150g
Lens mount Canon, Nikon, Sigma
Included accessories Lens cap, lens pouch

Amateur Photographer Testbench GOLD

Sigma 12-24mm f/4 DG HSM Art

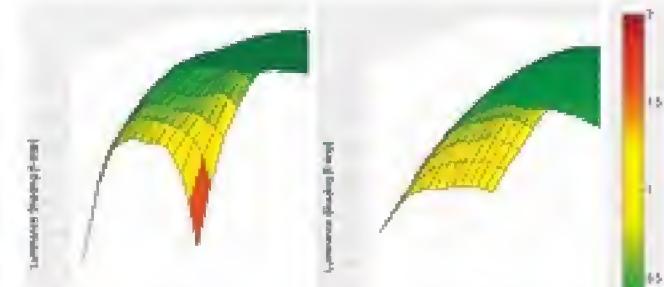
Resolution

Our Applied Imaging tests indicate that the lens is at its sharpest in the centre towards the widest end of the focal length. It's exceptionally sharp when used wide open (f/4) at 12mm and the chart tells us the centre improves at 24mm when the aperture is closed down towards f/5.6. Users will find they'll record the finest edge-to-edge sharpness across the frame between f/5.6 and f/8.



Shading

Shoot at the widest end of the zoom (12mm) with an aperture of f/4 and vignetting is noticeable. This corner shading quickly disappears at 12mm when you close the lens down to f/5.6. Edges are approximately 1.2EV darker than the centre at 24mm, but again this corner shading improves by stopping down to f/5.6 or beyond.

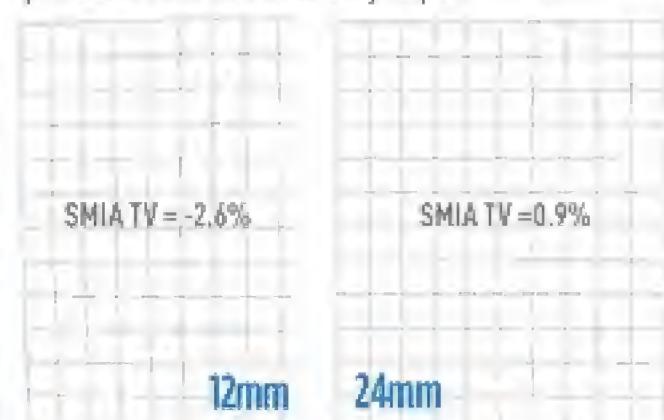


12mm f/4

24mm f/4

Curvilinear distortion

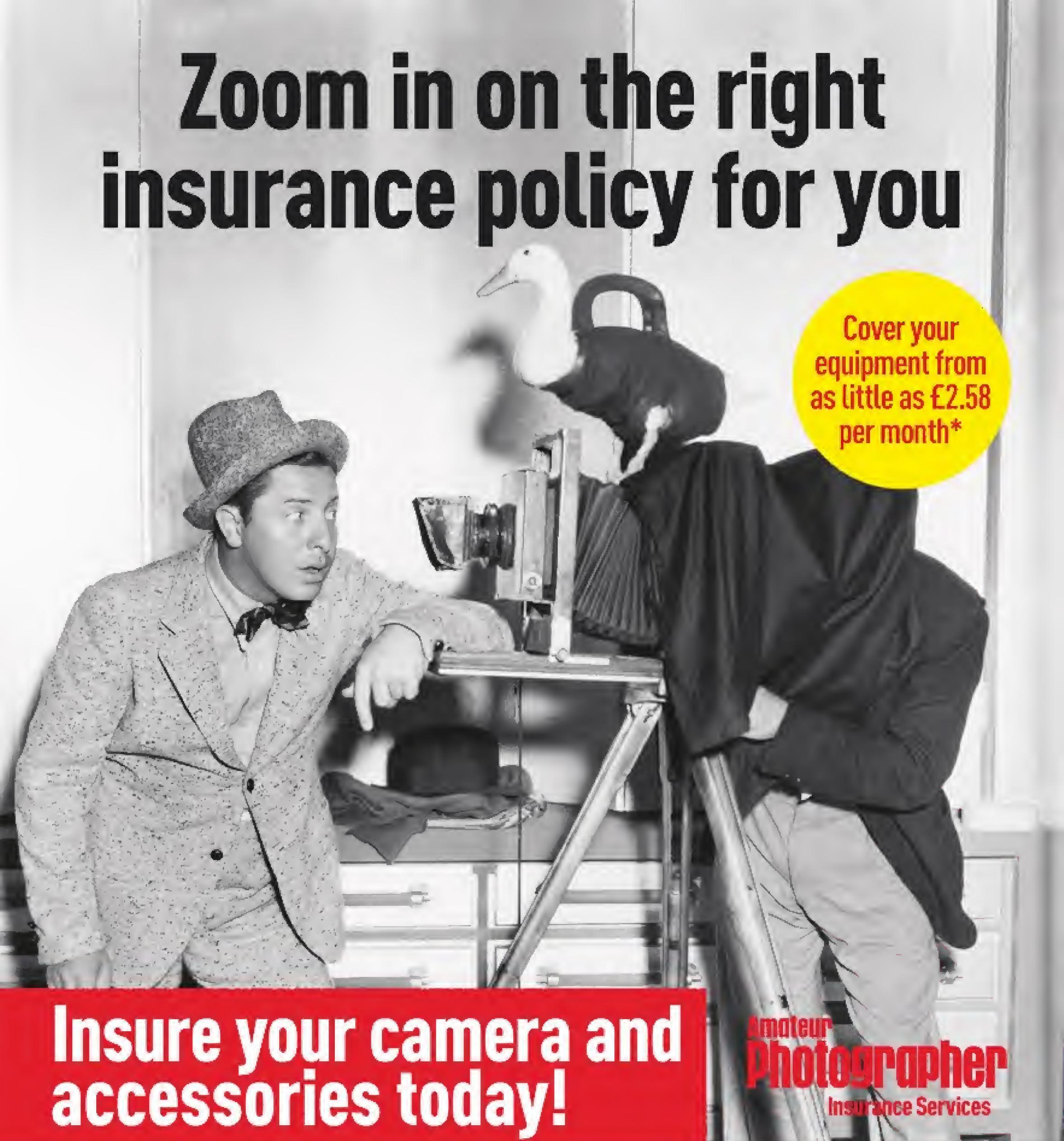
Straight lines bow outward from the centre of the image at 12mm, but you'll find that this barrel distortion becomes less recognisable when you zoom in. At 18mm, there's no trace of distortion whatsoever and there's only a faint sign of pincushion distortion when you push to 24mm.



12mm

24mm

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Capture One queries

Q For my holidays in Vietnam last summer, I ditched my heavy Canon EOS 7D Mark II and lenses, and took my small Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark II, much to the relief of my back. I was amazed by the fantastic performance of this little camera, but I had a hitch when I tried to develop the raw files in Capture One software. I set the output to raw + JPEG in 3:2 ratio, but only the JPEGs get cropped – I have to manually crop every raw file in Capture One so they look like their JPEG counterparts. Also, it doesn't feature any profile for my old Panasonic lenses (7-14mm, 14-45mm and 45-200mm), so it can't apply any automatic correction to distortion, and so on. Very few Panasonic lenses are listed, and even newer ones such as the 12-60mm are not included. Do you have any solutions to these problems?

Alessandro Rissone

A It's quite normal that the raw file doesn't get physically cropped. The fundamental concept of a raw file is that it contains unaltered image data. With Olympus raw files the cropped mode and other picture customisations are recorded in proprietary metadata. If you loaded the file into Olympus Viewer or, for

example, Adobe Lightroom, the software would respect the crop mode and display the cropped view of the image, although the entire sensor area remains accessible if required. It doesn't appear that Capture One does this – at least not by default. It's not difficult to set the crop manually within Capture One and then to apply it to the rest of your images.

Capture One and lens-specific corrections for distortion, vignetting, chromatic aberration and even corner softening is a bit of a grey area. Phase One does provide lens profiles, but its product notes suggest that these are not necessary with Micro Four Thirds and other lenses because the necessary correction data is accessible in the image file metadata. There certainly is such data – that's how compatible cameras produced corrected versions of the image in-camera – but I'm just not exactly sure how well or extensively Capture One makes use of this data. Ultimately, you should be able to tell from examining your shots if any automatic corrections are adequate or not.

Laptop advice

Q I have spied a laptop in a sale. It has an AMD A8 7410 processor with AMD Radeon R5 graphics, 2.2GHz,



The Canon lens in question

All steamed up

Q I've had a Canon EF-S 10-18 f/4.5-5.6 IS STM lens for about a year and it's been a good bit of kit. Recently, though, it's suffered from two bouts of moisture visible through the front element, which have precluded its use for an hour or so. On neither occasion did the lens go through sudden changes in temperature or been subject to moisture. Both times were sunny days with the lens performing perfectly normally. Can you suggest a possible cure in addition to apart from putting it in a bag of rice for a day?

Velocette

A For moisture to condense on the optical surfaces inside your lens there would normally be considerable humidity and a relatively cold lens glass. Clearly there is water in the lens, although why you are getting condensation on sunny days is a bit puzzling. I'd recommend getting some decent-sized packs of desiccant silica gel. Seal the gel packs and the lens in an airtight container and place in a warm, but not hot, place for a couple of days or so. In the meantime, check for any moisture where you store your lens. If the condensation reappears, you need to get the lens serviced. If you ignore this, there is a risk of internal corrosion and the lens might even stop working properly.



Alessandro Rissone had some issues using Capture One software

8GB RAM, 1TB hard drive, 15.6in screen with the resolution of 1366x768 pixels, which I believe is HD, just not 1080p. How do you think it would perform with Lightroom 6? I have an SSD I can use with it.

Monkeyphotogirl

A Lightroom's main challenge to a computer is file handling. An SSD would definitely be a big help, but modern laptops are usually up to the task with conventional hard

drives. The AMD A8 7410 CPU is not a hot rod, but it's adequate and should be able to run Lightroom. I have run earlier versions of Lightroom on much less powerful hardware. Probably the main issue is the display, but again it's not a disaster, although 1366x768 pixels means the screen will be crowded. Cheap laptop screens are usually not very good for colour accuracy or viewing angles. Do get the screen calibrated anyway.

Q&A compiled by Ian Burley

SIGMA

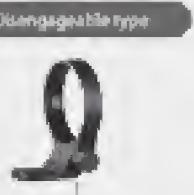
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(Metal)



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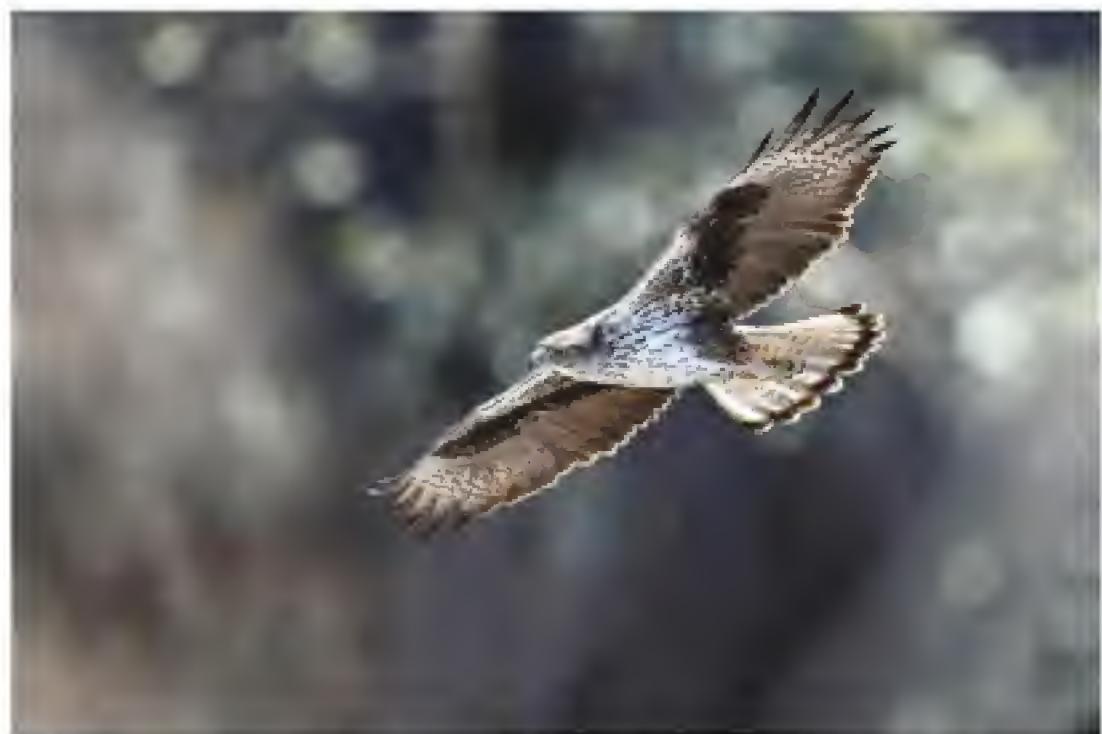
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PROTECTOR

My life in cameras

Wildlife photographer Dick Forsman discusses the cameras that have shaped his life and career



Bonelli's eagle: one of the most endangered raptors in Europe

Dick Forsman



Born in Helsinki, Finland, Dick Forsman is an all-round wildlife photographer with a special interest in birds of prey in flight. This year he has had two books published on raptors, his favourite subject, called *Flight Identification of Raptors of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East* published by Bloomsbury Natural History and a coffee-table, large-format book *Raptors in Focus* published by Reed New Holland. Visit www.dickforsman.com.

1970 Minolta SR-T 101

The Minolta SR-T 101 was my first SLR with interchangeable lenses, which I got second-hand from a friend in 1970. Before the Minolta, I had a Russian Lubitel-2, an old-time twin-lens reflex, for some five years, but this was no good for shooting birds. With the Minolta I now had my first serious tool for capturing birds, and I could also do some macro photography.



1971 Nikon F Photomic

In 1971 I started what turned out to be nearly 30 years as a Nikon photographer. The Nikon F was a superb brand with great lenses, which I was loyal to until the late 1990s. I upgraded my cameras regularly and finished my Nikon career with the then flagship model, the Nikon F5, which is regarded by many as the best Nikon camera ever made.



1999 Canon EOS 3

When Canon launched its image-stabilised long lenses in the late 1990s I had no choice but to give up Nikon and switch to Canon for good. The EOS 3 was my first workhorse for several years, with a high-speed motordrive and a quick and accurate autofocus, both of which are essential qualities if you are shooting birds in flight. The Canon EOS 3 was also my last film camera, which I used with my first digital cameras for a few years.



2003 Canon EOS 10D

I had my first digital camera at a time when people were still hesitant about the development of digital cameras. Would they improve and finally outdate film cameras, or would film remain the tool of professionals? One could review the shooting results immediately, hence the learning curve rose steeply.



2012 Canon EOS-1D X

Since the EOS 10D, I've upgraded my Canons regularly and currently work with two EOS-1D X models. This is by far the best camera I've ever had. It is very fast, has a terribly accurate autofocus and its sensor is superb. It gives me excellent results even when handholding a 600mm lens with a 2x teleconverter (meaning a huge 1,200mm piece). This really is the dream tool of every wildlife photographer.





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The view from above



The Zenith 80 is a Russian copy of the Hasselblad 1600F

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Zenith 80

John Wade looks at the Zenith 80 medium-format camera from the 1970s

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IF YOU fancy owning a Hasselblad but can't stretch to the price, how about a Zenith 80? Made in Russia by Kiev Arsenal in 1957, it was originally called the Salyut. Then came the Salyut-S, which was exported under the name of the Zenith 80. It's a copy of the Hasselblad 1600F.

The camera body houses the reflex mirror, focal-plane shutter speeded 1/2-1/1000sec and a ground-glass focusing screen. A separate film magazine, with a metal sheath to protect the film when the magazine is detached from the body, takes 120 film, shooting 12 6x6cm images to a roll. A folding waist-level viewfinder slides on to the top of the body and the 80mm f/2.8 Industar-29 standard lens bayonets to the front.

Two other purpose-made lenses are available – a 65mm f/3.5 Mir-3 wideangle and a 300mm f/4.5 Tair-33 telephoto. In use, a preset lever around the lens is activated to keep the lens at full

aperture for focusing after the required aperture has been selected, then the shutter speed is set. A knob winds the film, tensions the shutter and lowers the mirror. The metal sheath is removed from the magazine and the lens is focused. As the release is pressed, the lens stops down to its preselected aperture, the mirror flips up and the shutter fires. Look out for the Zenith 80 in its special outfit case, with spare magazine, filters and collapsible lens hood.

What's good Medium-format images, interchangeable magazines, solidly built.

What's bad Shutter mechanism jams if speeds are set after film winding.



The three purpose-made lenses: 80mm f/2.8 Industar-29, 65mm f/3.5 Mir-3 and 300mm f/4.5 Tair-33

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CANON 17 - 40mm F4 USM "	MINT CASED £245.00
CANON 28 - 80mm 2.8 USM "L"	EXC++ CASED £75.00
CANON 28 - 300mm 1:5.6 IS USM "L" IMAGE STABILIZER	MINT-BOXED £1,275.00
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CANON 70 - 200mm 1:2.8 USM "L" IS IMAGE STAB MINT CASED £395.00	
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CANON 100 - 400mm 1:4 USM "L" IS IMAGE STABILIZER.. MINT-CASED £999.00	
CANON 14mm 1:2.8 USM "L"	MINT BOXED £795.00
CANON 100mm 1:2.8 USM "L" MACRO IMAGE STABILIZER	MINT £499.00
CANON 300mm 1:4 USM "L" IMAGE STABILIZER	MINT CASED £799.00
CANON 20mm 1:2.8 EFS	MINT £195.00
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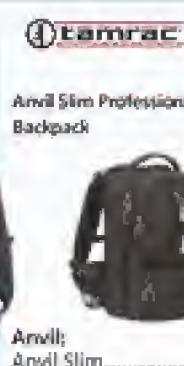
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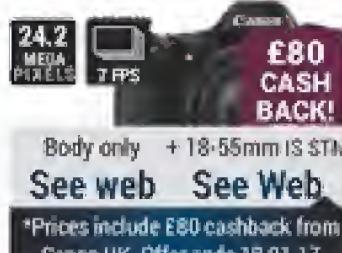
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100mm F2.8 EF Macro	E+ £179
100mm F2.8 USM Macro	E+ / E+ £249 - £279
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300mm F2.8 L USM	Exc £1,109
300mm F4 L USM	Exc £389
400mm 14 DD IS USM	E++ £2,899
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380EX Speedlite	E+ £69
420EX Speedlite	E+ £59
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Olympus 40-150mm F3.5-4.5 Zuiko	E+ £89
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £119 - £129
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ £349
Samyang 16mm F2.0 ED AS MC	Mint- £249
Olympus 18-160mm F3.5-6.3 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £129 - £149
Olympus 35mm F3.5 Macro Zuiko	E+ £99
Olympus 40-150mm F3.5-4.5 Zuiko	E+ £89
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £119 - £129
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ £349
Samyang 16mm F2.0 ED AS MC	Mint- £249
Olympus 18-160mm F3.5-6.3 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £129 - £149
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Samyang 16mm F2.0 ED AS MC	Mint- £249
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Olympus 35mm F3.5 Macro Zuiko	E+ £99
Olympus 40-150mm F3.5-4.5 Zuiko	E+ £89
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Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ £349
Samyang 16mm F2.0 ED AS MC	Mint- £249
Olympus 18-160mm F3.5-6.3 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £129 - £149
Olympus 35mm F3.5 Macro Zuiko	E+ £99
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Samyang 16mm F2.0 ED AS MC	Mint- £249
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Samyang 16mm F2.0 ED AS MC	Mint- £249
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Olympus 35mm F3.5 Macro Zuiko	E+ £99
Olympus 40-150mm F3.5-4.5 Zuiko	E+ £89
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £119 - £129
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ £349
Samyang 16mm F2.0 ED AS MC	Mint- £249
Olympus 18-160mm F3.5-6.3 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £129 - £149
Olympus 35mm F3.5 Macro Zuiko	E+ £99
Olympus 40-150mm F3.5-4.5 Zuiko	E+ £89
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £119 - £129
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ £349
Samyang 16mm F2.0 ED AS MC	Mint- £249
Olympus 18-160mm F3.5-6.3 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £129 - £149
Olympus 35mm F3.5 Macro Zuiko	E+ £99
Olympus 40-150mm F3.5-4.5 Zuiko	E+ £89
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ / E+ £119 - £129
Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko	E+ £349
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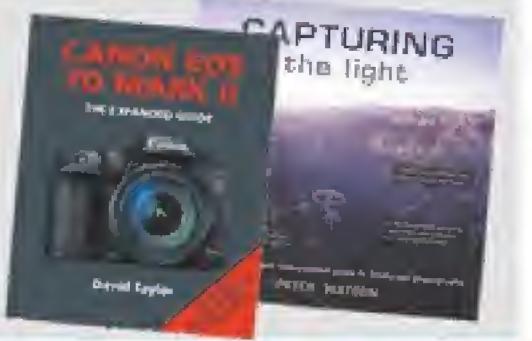
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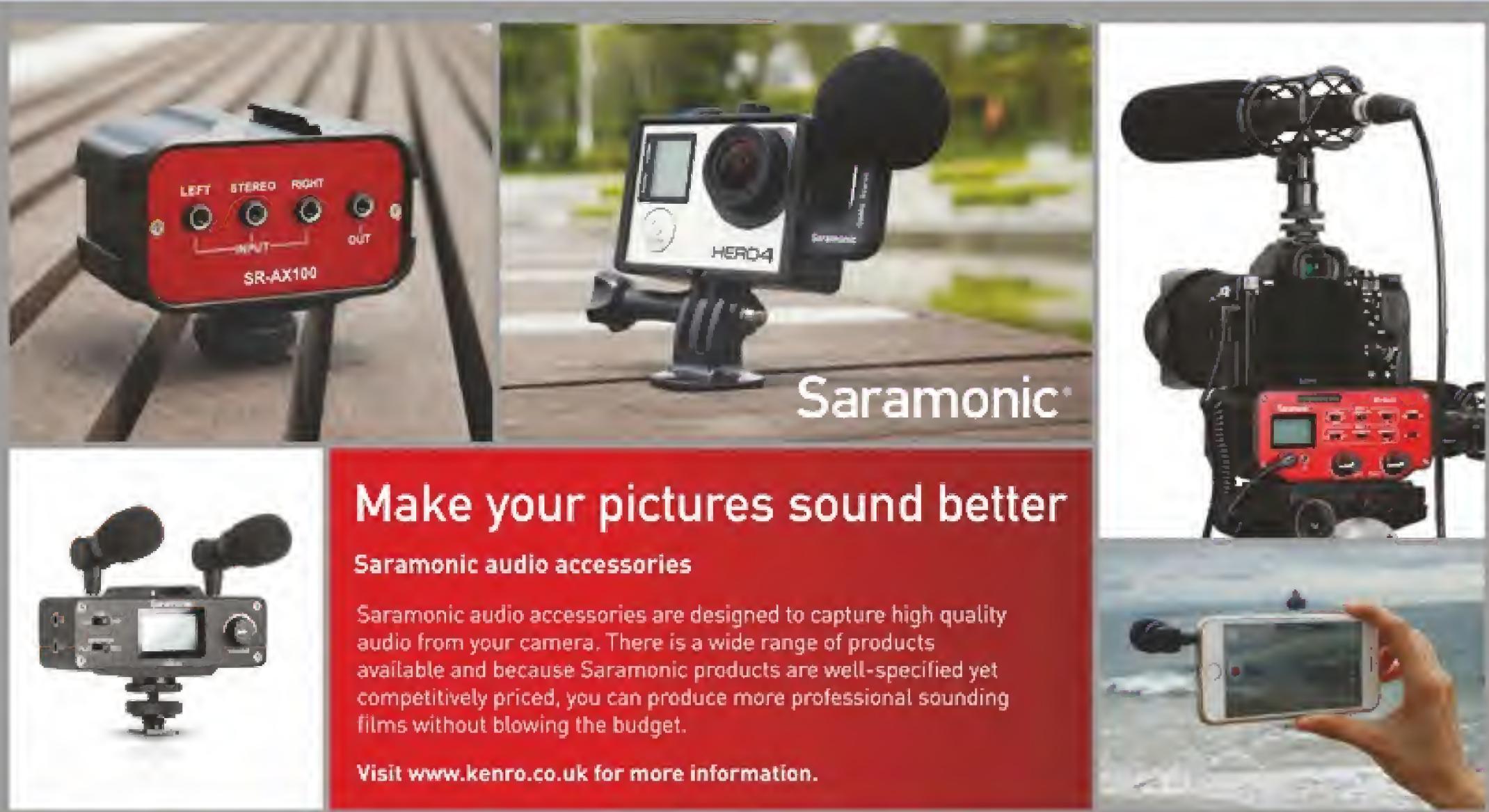
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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers...

'A Graveyard and Steel Mill in Bethlehem,' 1935, by Walker Evans



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Some photographs mature like good wine. They start out complex and subtle, and become more so with time. This, for me, is such a photograph. It dates from the Great Depression and is federally funded reportage.

The big cross in the foreground is soot-stained and no doubt corroded by acid rain. The smaller tombstones are almost blindingly white: thus far uncorrupted. As important as the crosses are the chimneys, too numerous to count easily. Overarching it all is not so much the 'Vault of Heaven' as power lines and telephone cables. There is something curiously disrespectful in their stance: they have begun, like Frankenstein's monster, to

dominate their creators. We see Blake's dark, satanic mills, only in the USA town of Bethlehem instead of Jerusalem.

Then you start to look more closely. To a devout Christian, the cross is a symbol of eternal life to come, but it is also a symbol of suffering and death. The terraced houses on the right look neat and well kept – this does not appear to be a poor neighbourhood. But equally, there is nothing to be seen on the little verandahs. Compared with where I live now, in a quiet rural village, this looks odd. People leave tables and chairs out on verandahs and in gardens, they do not expect them to be stolen. Then again, everyone has more of everything today, and it costs little to replace

such things, especially if you buy them second-hand.

The steel industry

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, was founded on Christmas Eve 1741. In the 19th century, it became heavily industrialised: the Bethlehem Steel Corporation poured steel there from 1857 to 1995 and was smaller only to US Steel in Pittsburgh. When this picture was taken, demand for (and the price of) steel had plummeted and lay-offs had cut deep and hard. The city's fortunes were not really restored until the Second World War, when it was one of the bastions of the Arsenal of Democracy. Today, it's pretty much a post-industrial city with a rising quality of life: as long ago as 2006 it was listed by

Money magazine as 88th in the top 100 places to live in the US.

This is what I meant by the photograph maturing. Today, we know about the Second World War, and the collapse of Bethlehem Steel, and gentrification. Are those houses now gentrified? I don't know, but I do know that tourism and casinos are probably more important to Bethlehem's future than steel. To be sure, most people would much rather live in the 21st century instead of 1935. But progress is never unalloyed and seldom universally beneficial. A picture like this makes us consider what we have lost, alongside what we have gained. What would a steelworker in 1955 have thought if he saw this photograph?





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